



THE
GOVERNMENT OF THE
MINISTRY OF PRISONS

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THE
GIFT OF THE KNEES:

OR

THE MINISTRY OF PRAYER, THE
MINISTRY OF POWER.

"All things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye
shall receive." MATT. xxi. 22.



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INTRODUCTION.

THE Gift of the Knees is the term used by the converted idolaters of Yoruba, in Central Africa, to indicate prayer, and it is taken for the title of the present volume because it is so peculiarly expressive. The object of this publication is not so much to bring forward new arguments in favor of prayer, as to exalt its mission and power as a vital every-day necessity to the living Christian. It is believed that the Christian world is only beginning to understand the full meaning of our Saviour's words, when He said, "*All things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.*"

There is a tendency to separate too widely the life of the soul and the life of the body. Religion and prayer have been too often considered matters adapted only to certain times and seasons, as if the Christian man were to draw his "vital breath" at stated intervals of time, and to live his true Christian life on one day of the seven only, or at least not on every day and hour of the week.

We are taught in the Scriptures to "pray without ceasing," and in the exercise of a faith like that of

the child ; and yet, though the instruction has been near two thousand years before the world, how few there are, or have been, who live in accordance with it ! From time to time one and another devoted person has in an extraordinary degree put confidence in our Saviour's words, " All things whatsoever ; " and the fact that these have been looked upon as of wonderful faith is the strongest proof that Christians need to cultivate more thoroughly the Gift of the Knees.

Of the men and women who have taken our Lord at his word in this respect, Mr. Müller, of the celebrated Orphan Establishment in Bristol, England, and Mrs. Shipton, author of various devotional works, are notable examples. Not to mention others, the late Rev. William Huntington of London, author of " The Bank of Faith," is another example of the same implicit faith in prayer as a factor in the problem of human life. Mr. Huntington was originally a coal-heaver, but was led to enter the ministry after he became the father of a family. At first he attempted to follow his vocation and preach at the same time ; but he tells us that he found it impossible to pursue this course, and determined to give up his own business and " continue in the work of God only, *whatever he might suffer by it.*" In accordance with this resolution, he threw himself entirely on the propitious arms of a kind Providence, and gave himself wholly to the ministry of the word and prayer. In other

words, he “lived by faith” in temporal as well as in spiritual matters. He records that his faith and patience were very sharply exercised at times, but in every instance the exercise gave additional strength.

It appears that there were those who objected to his principles and even ridiculed him. Of some of these he says, “If they deny the inspection of God into our temporal concerns, they must deny half the Bible, which informs us that God adorns the lilies, feeds the ravens when they cry, and gives the lion his prey ; when He opens his hand they are filled, and when He takes away their breath they die. Strange ! that professors of Christ should rob Him of his glory, of which He is so tender — which He will never give to another — and which is due to Him from all the human race ; but much more so from professors, who pretend to renounce all confidence in the flesh in point of justification, and all pretensions to a portion in this life, when compared to the blessed earnest of a portion in the future. Surely such differ in spirit from the Apostles, who seemed so zealous for the honor of Christ that they would let no miracle of his slip unnoticed, unacknowledged, nor unrecorded. They tell us of the five barley loaves, and the five thousand fed — of the seven barley loaves, and the seven thousand fed — of the baskets of fragments that remained — and of the Saviour’s strict command that nothing of the produce of these miracles should be lost.

“They inform us of the Lord’s condescension in

coming to them on the shore of the sea of Tiberias, and of his baking bread and broiling fish upon the coals, to supply their wants — of the liberality of those who were converted by their ministry — of their selling their inheritances to support the gospel, and feed the poor of Christ's flock — and of Ananias and Sapphira being struck dead for mimicking the hospitality of the children of God. Israel's forty years' journey in the wilderness abounds with the miraculous providences of God, and so does the Book of Ruth. To make sport then of the mystery of Providence is to make sport of one half of the Bible.

"Some have affirmed that we have no warrant to pray for temporal things ; but, blessed be God, He has given us the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come ; yea, the promise of all things pertaining to life and godliness ; and whatever God has promised, we may warrantably pray for. Those that came to the Saviour in the days of his flesh prayed *chiefly* for temporal mercies : the blind prayed for sight, the lepers for a cure, the lame for the use of their limbs, and the deaf for the use of their ears. And surely, if they had prayed unwarrantably, their prayers could not have been so miraculously answered. Elijah prayed for a temporal mercy when he prayed for rain, and it is clear that God answered him. Elisha worked a miracle to produce a temporal mercy when he healed the barren plains of Jericho. Agur prayed to be

fed with food convenient for him, and you may pray for the same ; and what God gives you in answer to your prayers, you will be thankful for. That state is surely best that keeps you dependent on God and thankful to Him, and so you shall find it in the end."

"They have a common saying in the Weald of Kent," Mr. Huntington says, in another place, "when the daughter of an old farmer is married : if it be inquired what portion the old man gave, the answer is, 'He gave them not much money ; but the old people are always sending them something — there is always something sent from the farm-house.' Then the observation usually is, 'Aye, hers is a hand-basket portion, which is generally the best, for there is no end to that.' Even so, our everlasting Father gives to his poor children a 'hand-basket' portion — a basket being that which we generally fetch our daily provisions in. And God sometimes even puts his blessing in the basket, and then it seldom comes home empty ; as it is written, 'Blessed shall be thy basket.' (Deut. xxviii. 5.) Our blessed Saviour eyed this promise on the Mount, when He was going to feed five thousand men, besides women and children, with five barley loaves and two small fishes ; it is said, He looked up to heaven, and blessed, and brake. And that blessing was enough, for they were all filled, and there were twelve baskets full of fragments. Then the blessing appeared in the basket. Then, too, the proverb

of the ‘hand-basket portion’ appears true ; and our blessed Saviour lived on it while here below; yea, the whole Levitical tribe lived on it.

“I am firmly of opinion that the ‘hand-basket portion’ is the best, both for soul and body ; because it keeps us to prayer, exercises our faith, engages our watchfulness, and excites our gratitude. It does not appear that the prodigal son added much to his fortune when he desired the portion of goods that fell to him ; that is, he desired to have an independent stock of his own, and to be left to improve it by himself. Poor soul ! I warrant you he flourished away at first; but he soon brought himself down upon a level with the swine.”

Mr. Huntington’s narrative is full of edifying instances that prove the blessedness of the ‘hand-basket portion,’ as he so quaintly and aptly describes it ; and in truth this is but carrying out the spirit of the petition we so constantly repeat, “Give us *day by day* our daily bread.” Of one occasion, upon which he was reduced to great straits, he remarks, “Though I was thus poor, yet I knew God had made me rich in faith ; and these words came in my mind with power, — ‘He multiplied the loaves and fishes to feed five thousand men, besides women and children.’ We went on our knees and turned the account of that miracle into a prayer, beseeching the Almighty to multiply what we had, or to send relief in another way, as his infinite wisdom thought proper. The next evening my landlord’s daughter

and son-in-law came up to see their mother, with whom I lodged, and brought some baked meat, which they had just taken out of their oven, and brought for me and my wife to sup along with them. These poor people knew nothing of us, nor of our God. The next day in the evening they did the same ; and kept sending victuals or garden stuff to us all the week long. We had not made our case known to any but God ; nor did we appear ragged, or like people in want ; no, we appeared even better in dress than those that relieved us ; but God sent an answer to our prayer, by them who knew not at the same time what they were about, nor did I tell them till some months after. While we were at supper I entertained them with spiritual conversation. After supper I went to prayer with them, and prayed most earnestly for them. And God answered it, for He sent the woman home deeply convicted that night ; nor, did her convictions abate till she was brought to see Christ crucified in the open vision of gospel faith, and to receive peace and pardon from Christ for herself. Some time after this, God began to work upon the husband also ; and then I related the forecited circumstance ; at the hearing of which, he told me how it was impressed on his mind that I was in want of victuals ; and his wife found fault with him for thinking so, saying, ‘The people are better to pass than we are.’ But he contradicted her, and insisted on her doing as he desired.”

After recapitulating many instances of God's goodness, Mr. Huntington says: "Indeed, I saw clearly that I had nothing to do but to pray, to study, and to preach; for God took care of me, and my family also, agreeably to his own promise, 'Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you?' And I have often thought the reason why our dear Lord and Master gave no inheritance to the Levitical tribe, who performed the sanctuary service, was, that they might learn to live by faith, and likewise to exercise and try the liberality of the worshipping tribes. And this appears to be the reason why the Apostles were sent out to preach without purse or scrip. Certainly God could have made them as rich as the Sanhedrim, had He thought proper."

George Müller, to whom reference has already been made, is a notable instance of the life of trust, but he is so widely known through various published accounts, that a detailed statement of his life and wonderful work would be superfluous in this place. It is enough to say that he supports an extensive orphan asylum near the city of Bristol, with means received in answer to prayer. Like Mr. Huntington, he believes that he has nothing to do but to pray, to study, and preach, though the added responsibility of the care of hundreds of orphans gives him much labor in dispensing the funds he receives. Mr. Müller's success is looked upon as a

"standing miracle," as if it were not to be expected that God would fulfill his promises. Not so does Mr. Müller think. Speaking of his faith, he says : "It is the self-same faith found in every believer, the growth of which I am most sensible of ; for by little and little it has been increasing for the last thirty years." Upon this the Rev. Dr. Sawtelle comments as follows : "Now, if it be true that Mr. Müller has received from God no extraordinary gifts, beyond that which is common to every believer, it becomes a solemn and momentous question, and one to be pondered deeply and prayerfully, *By what means has this ordinary faith attained in him to such marvelous strength ?* Whence came he in possession of that mysterious key by which he is able to unlock the store-house of God's treasures, and, as it were, help himself to whatever he needs ? Day by day, year after year, does this man of God receive the most extraordinary answers to prayer, by which he is able to carry forward the most stupendous and complicated works of benevolence, while the like precious faith in others is so small and feeble as to be utterly powerless in moving God's loving heart in the bestowment of blessings. Is there not a cause ? And ought not such facts and such questions to startle every believer into the most thorough searchings of hearts to discover the cause of his little faith ?

"Let us not attempt, as the manner of some is, to evade the issue, by resolving it all into the sov-

ereignty of God. True it is, God's sovereignty is all-pervading, and as manifest in the Chinese as it is in the British Empire ; but were an inquisition held to inquire into the cause of the well-developed, elastic foot of an Englishman, and the little dwarfish stump of a Chinese, no Christian parent would consider it a logical or a Scriptural answer to charge it all upon God's sovereignty. God acts as sovereign in giving to the infant a foot, and certain laws of physical development, in common with its other members ; but when the mother, in the pride of her heart, bandages that foot so tightly that the laws of development become nugatory and powerless,—in that case the sovereignty of God ceased when the bandaging commenced. Just so it is with faith.

“ Being seated with Mr. Müller at his own table, a few evenings since, the subject of faith naturally became the topic of conversation, when he beautifully remarked, ‘ The first germ of faith in the soul, is very much like a new-born infant in the cradle, very small and very weak, and its future growth and increase of strength as much depend on its daily constant exercise, as do the physical developments of the child.’ ‘ Yes,’ continued he, ‘ I can now as easily trust God for thirty-five thousand pounds as I could at first for five thousand.’ ”

“ Now,” Dr. Sawtelle continues, “ may not Mr. Müller’s experience in this vital and fundamental principle of our holy religion reveal to us the secret

cause of our own weak faith? We fold it up, as it were, in a napkin, lay it carefully away, and treat it as a tender, but foolish mother does her offspring: afraid of the open air, it will take cold; it must not walk out, it will fall and break its limbs; it must not take nutritious food, it is so delicate. So it is with that class of believers who do little else than to nurse and sing a kind of lullaby over their puny faith; it must never venture out of sight, or upon a stormy sea in a dark night; or, in other words, *never trust God!* O, what a misnomer to call this faith! And what is it worth, even if it can be called faith? So far as the wants of this perishing world are concerned, it is as worthless as the one talent buried in the earth; and if sufficient to save the soul, it can be saved ‘only as by fire.’ Let us not fail here to remark well the difference between these two grains of faith, both small and weak at the beginning; but one, by daily vigorous exercise, increases and grows into such mighty strength, that ‘as a prince it hath power with God;’ while the other, for want of exercise, sinks into imbecility, and becomes powerless for good.”

Certain persons in England have lately proposed that the power of prayer be tested, as scientific theories are tested; but here, in the case of George Müller, we have the experiment already made as carefully, and proved as thoroughly as it is possible for it to be done. The case has been stated thus:

"A poor and unknown man is convinced that it is his duty, as a servant of Christ, to labor in several ways for the relief of the temporal and spiritual wants of the ignorant and destitute. He consecrates himself to the work by dedicating to it his time and labor, and whatever pecuniary means should come into his possession. He resolves that he will neither appeal to any of the ordinary motives that dispose men to humanity, nor even solicit aid from any human being, but simply make his wants known to God, believing that, if he is doing the work of God, the divine promise is pledged in his behalf. Not only does he trust in God that all the pecuniary aid which he needs will be furnished, but that, in answer to prayer, all needed wisdom will be given him in the conduct of his complicated and arduous undertakings. The result meets his most sanguine expectations. The institution increases to a most magnificent charity, aside from its missionary, Bible and tract operations ; all its wants are from time to time supplied, and it is at the present moment carried on upon precisely the same principles as those upon which it was begun."

How shall these facts be accounted for ? Honest men of science can apparently come to but one conclusion. These facts can be referred to no other law than to that announced by the Saviour in his promise to answer the prayer of faith. "*All things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.*"

Mrs. Anna Shipton's two little volumes, "Asked of God," and "Tell Jesus," exemplify the same subject, and show the importance of *The Gift of the Knees* in private and humble life. The first volume presents the topic in a variety of aspects, and is illustrated with incidents drawn from the writer's personal experience. The second is composed of her recollections of a fellow-worker of "like precious faith," who, in conjunction with her husband, was the author of a number of tracts breathing a spirit of deep devotion to the cause of Christ.

The remainder of this volume is an incident exhibiting the sweet and child-like faith of the favorite hymn-writer of Germany, well named "Fear God" Gellert. Besides giving us another example, the story of Gellert teaches that this faith of which we write is to be limited by no lines of nationalities, and that God hears his people wherever their voices are raised to him in humility and trust.

The eleventh chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews is an inspired commentary on this subject, and there can be no doubt but that St. Paul intends to teach by it that Faith is a power capable of transcending and modifying every other agency, for in his catalogue of the victories of faith he includes the subjection of almost every form of what we call natural laws! Let us then close with the words of the Apostle, "Without faith it is impossible to please

Him ; for he that cometh to God must believe that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him." "I will, therefore that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting."

BOSTON, *August, 1872.*

I.

ASKED OF GOD.



ASKED OF GOD.

I.

TEMPLE TREASURES.

"Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the Lord our God."—PSALM XX. 7.

PRAAYER is the first breathing of divine life that acknowledges that God *is*; praise is the testimony that God is *love*, and is born only of faith in the Lord of glory crucified and risen. Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty; and one of the first evidences of his presence is the desire to prove the power of that heavenly key on whose wards is inscribed, "All things are yours."

Why are the results of God's dealings with his people so little known? why are the evidences of prayer heard and answered treated as fanaticism? Because lukewarm Christians have so barren an experience of dealing personally with God themselves, that they meet what is wonderful with incredulity, and disallow the necessity of guidance in those matters which they consider too common to bring before Him.

We have daily proof that the Holy Spirit does lead on the soul to trust in God for tangible answers, before any mark of saving grace is visible. Nay, some, like Saul and Balaam, may receive the gifts of the Spirit, and yet not die the death of the righteous ; while the cry of need from the heart that knows nothing of his love, honors God by believing Him able and willing to *give*, and God honors the suppliant by giving ; for “the Lord is rich unto all that call upon Him.”

A Christian lady narrates her first belief in God from the early remembrance of childhood, which has remained through a long life of active service in the vineyard as a star on her path, and constantly reminds her to make known her requests unto God.

She was taken by her nurse to a chapel, where the minister reproved his hearers for their lack of faith, their gloomy fears, the result of refusing to prove for themselves the promises of God the Father.

“O, children !” said the preacher, “make your requests known unto God. Draw up the blind that hides the light, and look up to heaven, and believe that He is able to do for you more than you can ask or think.”

The seed of truth fell into the little one’s mind ; and when the nurse had laid her to sleep, and she was left alone, she pondered on the wonders she had heard for the first time. The desire of proving if it were true followed. She listened. All was still. And taking literally the words she had heard, “I

went," she said, "to the window. I drew up the blind, and looking up at the starlit sky, I told God what I wanted—a china dinner service for playthings. Having done this, I laid my head on my pillow, with an assurance that if God really lived above that clear bright sky, then He had heard my request, and if so He would answer me; for I had done exactly as the preacher had told children to do. The following day a kind relative sent me a set of china dishes, more beautiful than I could have imagined. From that hour I knew that God *was*, and that He was *able* to do all things; but it was long before I heard through whom we receive forgiveness of sins, and become children by faith in Christ Jesus. This practical experiment of prayer has never left me."

"Can an unbeliever pray?" If he prays he is not an unbeliever. The sailor who on the wrecked ship cries for deliverance, though he be unconverted, acknowledges the power of God; but though saved from drowning, he may lose his soul, for the promise of eternal life is in and through Jesus Christ crucified for our sins.

In a country village in England, a young man, a poacher, was seized with sudden violent illness. As he lay in excruciating agony of body, the terrors of hell made him afraid, and he cried for mercy. The minister of the place was aroused at midnight by a call to the cottage where the poacher resided. He found him kneeling on the floor in a state of overwhelming anguish, praying to God for deliver-

ance, surrounded by his astonished neighbors. This state had continued for many hours without any relief.

The minister reproved him, telling him that he was insulting God by such prayers, — that the sinner had no promise of pardon and life but through the blood of the Saviour, and that God would not hear him. The young man listened silently, and the Lord's faithful servant, like Abraham, looked on in faith, "fully persuaded that what He had promised He was able also to perform."

The man pleaded the blood of the Crucified, and the grace promised through Jesus. That plea was instantaneously responded to. Pardon and peace fell on the agonized soul like dew on the thirsty ground, and the pardoned sinner lived to testify that to ask for assurance of the forgiveness of sins through the Lamb slain was to receive it.

This then is the heart's vital prayer, and if you have it, doubt not that all other things shall be added thereto.

Here too is the explanation of wandering thoughts in prayer. They arise from the lack of a simple, definite request. The trembling sinner, when he has death and hell before him, does not wander in thought. And whenever prayer is the expression of need, however simple, it will be the same. If the cross we are bearing galls us; if we have forsaken the Fountain of living waters, and the broken cisterns have failed us; if we are asking

for the life of one dear to us, or the return of our prodigal, or the success of service, or safety and deliverance from danger — ah, who then complains of wandering thoughts ?

Yet, who has not to deplore them ? He who has dealings with God alone knows them to be among the fiery darts of the wicked one, and that he requires another power than his own to resist them. Nay, even when the door of the closet is closed, and the weary soldier comes on some special errand of comfort or counsel, the meanest suggestion can be used of Satan to draw away the heart from its object, if we do not watch ; but blessed be God “ we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities.” (Heb. iv. 15.)

You may have prayed like Jabez (1 Chron. iv. 10), and God may have given you your request ; but you may not be able to see it ; you know not in what way the Lord answered him ; but He *did* answer him, and He has answered or will answer you.

He may not have kept you out of the furnace, but “ the voice of the Lord divideth the flames of fire ” (Ps. xxix. 7), and thus by many an affliction has He kept you from evil, that it should not grieve you. He did not deliver you from the wild waters, but He made known to you his wonders in the deep, and so enlarged your coast ; moreover, his hand has been with you, and upheld you, and He *has* “ blessed you indeed.”

To keep alive the heart's desire for the heavenly life, we need not only the recognition of answers to our prayers in our necessities and blessings, but we need also to remember and understand in part — what we shall know hereafter — former petitions. "Our fathers understood not thy wonders in Egypt ; they remembered not the multitude of thy mercies."

Eternity only will reveal our heavenly treasures. One may appear a "strange" thing to us ; we recall the abundance of our grief and complaint when we poured out our soul before the Lord for it ; but now we have a multitude of heart-melting records around it ; the bitterness of the sorrowful spirit is forgotten, and we rejoice that the treasure was rendered to Him who gave it, while we read upon it, " Asked of God."

Another petition was granted : it has been blotted with tears, and sends a quivering pang of grief through the natural heart *now* ; but hereafter we shall see that it was well it was asked of God, — but God took it. Shall He not do what He will with his own ?

And there are some treasures that, like children's hoards, are mean to other eyes ; to us they are radiant with the light of the glory. So often have we praised over them ; so often have we displayed them with exulting joy ; so often have we spread them anew at the feet of Jesus, as the convincing proof of prayer answered in tender carefulness for the soul that trusted in Him. These things of time —

we prayed for them, they were needful, and we had them. We asked for spiritual blessings, we received them, but we know not how or when. They are heavenly germs, and we cannot recognize their veiled forms in the beauty in which we shall hereafter behold them. They are as grains to the wheat field, as seeds for the summer flower.

Fear not ! our great High Priest is ever listening, and never misunderstands the sighs and groans of his waiting people. If his child ask bread, will He give him a stone ? or if he ask a fish, will He give him a serpent ? Nay, it is a Father who listens, it is a Brother who pleads.

“ For the precious things of the earth and the fullness thereof. For the precious things brought forth by the sun, and for the precious things put forth by the moon.” For the sweet hours spent in his service, and the sweeter ones at his feet, we thank Him now. But we shall eternally remember in our heaven-taught harmonies, the midnight of mourning, and the wasting sickness, the hope that never reached fruition, and the fiery trial which seemed nigh to consume us. Here has been perfected the patience for which we prayed ; the faith that had drooped, and the love that had grown cold. Each one is a seal which bears on it the token of a living Saviour’s undying love, and we shall say, “ Verily, God hath heard me ; He hath attended to the voice of my prayer. Blessed be God, which hath not turned away my prayer, nor his mercy

from me." There shine God's gifts like the stars forever, gathered for us perhaps by some beloved one who loved us, some faithful friend who watched over us, some poor and needy one loved and honored of the Lord. There they are, our temple treasures! and on one and all we read through the blood and intercession of our great High Priest, "Asked of God." Blessed day when forever we shall bask in the glory of God's "*Un-speakable Gift*," and with hearts full of tender recollections of his long-suffering and gracious care, we shall own with unfaltering praise that grace hath done it all!

"THE EXCEEDING RICHES OF HIS GRACE."

A beloved servant of the Lord, now gone from our midst, was overheard repeating softly to himself, "I shall have grace even for that." His brother, supposing that he was meditating on the near approach of release from his sufferings, quoted the twenty-third Psalm. "O," replied the happy saint cheerfully, "I was not thinking of death, but of seeing the Lord Jesus! I shall gaze in his face, and then I shall fall at his feet, and He will stoop and raise me to his breast; and I shall have grace even for that."

Shall I see my risen Saviour?
Hear his voice, behold Him nigh?
Touch that very hand extended
On the cross on Calvary?

Oft my soul seemed nigh to meet Him,
But death's shadow passed away;
So she folds her wings, awaiting
Still the fair Sabbath day,

When I never more shall wander,
Never miss his blessed smile.
Peace, my heart, and trust Him fully
For thy rest this little while !

Sighs have dulled my song's glad measure,
Sorrows passed with passing days ;
But the conflict and the triumph
Swell the themes of endless praise.

Patience ! Let me wait his coming ;
He will share my desert road ;
He will keep the soul He purchased
With the ransom of his blood.

Though so bright, so blest, so beauteous, —
Doth my heavenly mansion shine,
Something fairer, something dearer,
There I look to claim as mine.

O, it is *thyself*, Lord Jesus !
For the richest Gift above
All the gifts art thou, sweet Giver,
Who hast crowned me with thy love.

Grace He'll grant, and I shall need it
When before his throne I come,
Hear his voice, that quelled the tempest,
Bid his weary wanderer home.

I shall see that face that sorrowed
O'er his faithless friends, and trace
Smiles that beamed upon the children
Folded in his fond embrace.

I shall see the way He led me
Through the flame and through the flood,

And on many an unseen blessing,
Read the record, "Asked of God."

There the prayer that seemed rejected,
And the answer long forgot,
Will await me in the temple,
Though on earth I knew them not;

Like the storms and clouds of morning,
In the sunset's radiant glow,
Gath'ring hues of wondrous beauty,
For the Lord's resplendent bow.

Grace He grants for joy and sorrow,
Grace for dying days ; and when
I behold my Lord in glory,
Grace must still my heart sustain.

I shall fall like John before Him,
With that rapturous sight oppress ;
He will stoop in love to raise me
To the shelter of his breast.

Grace hath found me, grace upholds me,
Grace will grant me all I need ;
Grace secures me Christ and glory—
This is grace for me indeed !

II.

THE PRAYER OF FAITH.

"Have faith in God." — MARK xi. 22.

WHY are there so many perplexed Christians? — why so many puny ones? Why are there so few exponents of Christ? Because the character of the Eternal God is so little the object of consideration, and so many are "willingly ignorant" of Him with whom they have to do. Yet in what has the Lord Jehovah failed in bringing sinners nigh unto Himself?

Notwithstanding every encouragement that He has given to his people to trust his love, to confide in his wisdom, and to believe in his faithfulness, how slack are they to take Him at his word! Yet who that have experienced this blessed commerce with heavenly power that could not relate more facts of the love, and truth, and wisdom of the Lord, shown to them individually, than tongue could tell, or than books could contain?

If the Lord be but faintly apprehended, no wonder that the Spirit is but partially manifested. The hand of faith must be stretched forth to receive. "According to your faith be it unto you." Yet it is not the mere fact of receiving some tangible answer

to a prayer that is the end of faith, but the unfolding of God Himself to the spiritual understanding, and he who stops short of this has missed a blessing.

Some few years since I stood by the bedside of a dear old disciple whom I loved, who was fast sinking in death. As I entered the house, one of her family said it was too late for her to recognize me. She had been long unconscious. Her daughter remarked,—

“If she does not recognize *you*, she will never know anything on earth again.”

I took the hand of the dying saint, in earnest prayer that He who had so often communed with us would commune with us now, and be present to bless the weak one she was to leave for a season. And then I spoke.

“Dear friend, do you know me?”

“No,” she answered faintly; “I cannot see.”

Kneeling close by her pillow, I whispered,—

“Do you remember our prayer meetings in the upper room, when we asked the Lord to give us souls in this place?”

“Why, it is my dear Mrs. S——,” she answered, with sudden animation. “‘Remember!’ Why it was the very gate of heaven! God *will* answer! He *has* answered already!”

“You will soon see Jesus, whom you love, and meet again your dear Christine.”

“And *you*,” she said lovingly, “you will not be long after me.”

"No ; but I shall miss you sadly here. Before you leave me, will you ask the Lord to give you a parting message for me, to strengthen my heart?"

"Ah, no ! I am too weak to hear Him."

"Try," I entreated. "I will ask Him." And I lifted up my heart to the Lord to send me a word through his aged disciple, with whom I had so often taken sweet counsel, and whose true affection and loving prayers had been oftentimes a solace in my wilderness way.

There was deep silence. At first I thought the spirit had departed with the effort. The heavy breathing ceased, and the countenance of the dying saint became fixed, with an expression so solemn and imposing that all were awed. She opened her eyes at last, and looked upwards. Never shall I forget that expression ! It was to me as if she already beheld the face of the Lord unveiled.

At last she said slowly and distinctly, —

"He says for you that He will bless you. It is so much more than forty-fold, so much more than I can tell you." Then raising her hand in the attitude of listening, she continued, in a voice deep and peculiar, such as I never but once heard, and that too was in a blessing from the lips of the dying, "He says — the *Lord* says for you — '*Whatsoever thou shalt ask in my name I will give thee.*' Mind," she repeated with great solemnity and emphasis, "WHATSOEVER," and the upraised hand dropped heavily down.

The Lord had heard and answered. The words fell into my heart with untold power. The lips that had conveyed his last message of love were closed ; the cold hands lay motionless ; but the germ of life from the hand of the great Sower, committed to his servant, was to witness of that eternal life and eternal love that we are so slow in receiving.

She lay as if dead. Long we waited for any sign of life, and none seemed given. I still knelt beside her, and knowing that my voice (if any) would reach the departing spirit, I bade her farewell until we should meet in the glory of the presence of our coming Lord, and asked her if she had anything more to say to me.

A smile, her last, passed over her death-stricken countenance, as she answered, —

“ What ! have you not enough yet ? ” She spoke no more, and this precious promise was the dying blessing from her who “ being dead, yet speaketh.”

Dear reader, I commend it to you. Hundreds of times it has nerved my fainting heart, and upheld my sinking spirit, “ opened the gates of brass,” and “ cut in sunder the bars of iron ; ” and yet hundreds of times have I forgotten my staff, and have received the blessing simply without looking out for the manifestation of my gracious Lord, and all the glorious gifts enfolded in answered prayer. Often have I tarried, and doubted, and feared, as if I had had to do with a fellow-mortal, and not with the Almighty God.

Where should I begin and where I should end if I attempted a catalogue of his blessings through my making my requests known unto Him, and pleading the promise He had Himself given me to plead?

When the Lord Jesus said, "Have faith in God," He gave us a much richer charta than we accept, and we thus miss the promised "peace" which glorifies Him. You pray for guidance, and you believe it has been granted you, yet when difficulties obstruct the path, and events are other than you have wished them or anticipated, you say, "After all, I have mistaken the way," as if dangers and difficulties and fiery trials were strange things for the people of God, and not part of their earthly heritage. Is the first desire of your heart to glorify God? Then let Him guide you, and if you seek a deeper knowledge of Him, follow Him, and trust Him confidently. "Man's goings are of the Lord; how can a man then understand his own way?" (Prov. xx. 24.) Be not fearful, if you have committed your way to Him; nor cry at every difficulty, "There is a lion in the way."

My faith was once tried in this form among the high Alps. Day by day I had waited for light on my next step. I had none, but that I must leave the place where I then sojourned in the direction of Italy. The diligence that had appointed to call for me neglected to do so, and I saw it pass a few hundred yards from the place where I was awaiting it.

Nothing remained for me to do but to take a carriage and follow the first post. All was unavailing, as I could not proceed until the next day. When I arrived at the inn where I intended to sleep, I found it in a state of preparation for a ball which was to take place that evening, and the only room unoccupied was one over that in which the brass band would perform for the dancers. This, after a fatiguing day and with a long journey before me, was not inviting. Suddenly I remembered an inn among the mountains in that direction, and this thought seemed to suggest it as a quiet rest until I could proceed by the diligence the following day. Accordingly I sought for a conveyance. None was to be had, not even a mule. The *voiturier* who had brought me so far only consented to carry me onward at an exorbitant price. The landlady assured me that the place I sought was only an "evening's walk," and that no conveyance was needed.

I was sad-hearted (I am so faithless), not understanding why every project had failed, and expecting that the way should be plain and easy *because* I had committed it to God. I was quite clear with regard to my departure, time, and direction, and as I thought over, step by step, the path I had been led, my mind became assured that, however rough the road, it was right.

The afternoon was delightful. Against the cloudless blue sky the gray granite and snow-capped

Alps stood forth in strong relief. The valleys were rich in their finest autumn coloring, and contrasted with the verdant slopes down which the sunshine slanted ; the bright green lake embosomed like an emerald in its golden setting, the grand old Alpine pines with their gigantic trunks riven by the storms, the mossy carpet here and there verdant with fern and many-tinted lichen, adding life and beauty to the scene. .

Invigorated by the bracing air, I said, “I will walk,” and my heart, satisfied that the same loving hand that had never failed me would lead me still, I went forth to seek a guide. I walked on through the straggling village without finding one. Seeing a woman at work on the road-side, I asked her to procure me a lad to carry my bags and shawls, and to guide me to the inn indicated. In good French she replied that she would do so, and left me slowly pursuing my way. I climbed the first hill, and found that I had mistaken the road. So I descended, and there waited to rest until the guide should join me. Nearly an hour had elapsed, and no one was in sight, when at length the woman herself appeared washed and dressed in her holiday suit, so that I did not recognize her, and presented herself as my guide. We walked on until I could proceed no farther, and then pausing and looking into the distance, I inquired, “Where is the inn? When shall we reach it?” .

“Perhaps in less than an hour, if we walk stead-

ily," replied my guide. My strength had utterly failed, and I sank down wearily on a granite seat that seemed prepared for the traveller's rest by the way-side.

The consternation of my companion was evident in her countenance, and I was silent, marveling in my mind if it could be the will of the Lord that I should be where I was. Every step had taken me deeper into the mountains, and farther from human habitations. No one in the world, except the stranger by my side, knew where I was, and my nearest and dearest friend would have failed to imagine me in the twilight standing on a mountain in the highest inhabited valley in Europe, quite uncertain where to pass the night.

"What shall we do?" exclaimed my guide in dismay.

"Is it not likely that some one will pass to the ball?" I inquired.

The woman shook her head. "The dancers do not come from the mountains."

My kind conductor strove to encourage me to proceed. It was impossible.

"But what *will* you do, madame?"

"I will pray to my Father which is in heaven," I answered. "I will ask Him to help me; and I will sit down here and wait."

"Wait! What can you get by waiting?" said the woman, doubtfully.

"A carriage to take me to the inn," I replied,

trying to smile, and my courage rising as I realized the promised "*whatsoever*."

My guide looked earnestly at me, and smiled incredulously as she said, "And do you really think that the good God will send one?"

I began to show her that it was not the dead Christ of the crucifix to whom I prayed, but the living Lord, who knew my sorrows as well as my sins. From the latter He had *died*, to save me; for the former He *lived* to help me.

And the woman listened as if it had been a new song. She was, I found, of a French Protestant family, and knew something of the Truth theoretically, but nothing of it experimentally in its simplicity and power.

I was tired and faint; it was an effort to look or speak cheerfully; but I was not a hypocrite when I strove to do so, feeling that my listener would better understand the reality of trusting in God if she saw that it upheld me.

The last lingering rays of a September sun were slowly disappearing from the heights; the valleys were deepening in shadow; and still our road, cut out beneath the mountains, lay before us un-trodden.

In vain my guide climbed the rock that jutted over the valley by which she could overlook the road. Nothing was to be seen, and by her fallen countenance on her return, I surmised that she was treating the thought of help as a visionary idea, and

that after all it was not likely that the great God should care whether I was too weary to proceed, or if I remained on the road all night.

My ear, always sensitive, and more peculiarly so in this mountain district, detected in the far distance the roll of wheels, long before anything was in sight.

I told the woman my heavenly Father had sent for me. A bend of the road which wound round the mountain-pass brought in sight a German cart, laden with planks for building, drawn by a cream-white ox.

It would have been impossible for me to have overtaken it had not the beautiful creature resolutely stopped to drink at one of the sparkling streams that flowed through the bole of an old beech, and emptied itself into the lake below. "*Does God care for oxen?*" Yea. And doth He care less for the weakest child of his family, who has no help but in Him?

Before the ox had slaked his thirst I was by his side.

I said, perhaps exultingly, certainly joyfully,—

"I told you I should be sent for."

"Madame will not surely travel in the cart?" suggested my French woman.

"Madame will go in the carriage that is sent for her," I replied, laughing at her disappointment.

The master of the ox and cart was Italian, a tall, grave, and interesting person; the driver was a

German boy ; and my guide, as I said before, was French. At my expressed desire to take advantage of his charette to the next inn, the Italian readily consented, and with the courtesy which is characteristic of the Italian peasant, gravely prepared me a place. The timber was so arranged that it formed an arch, which, lined with my mantle and shawls, made a comfortable seat.

The guide walked in front, and narrated to the Italian how I had waited for his cart, and what I had told her of the love of God and his answering prayer. The man returned from time to time to assure himself of my safety and comfort.

The woman's story being told, she returned to my side ; for the pace of the ox never outstripped her own. Then she told me her sorrows — of an only son, once her joy and pride, now married to a Romanist, and his parents had no place in his heart. I could but point her again to the living God, who I *knew* could turn the heart as it seemed good unto Him.

Another mile was passed, my voice had almost failed me, and we travelled on in silence ; nothing was heard but the chime of the ox-bells and the clear echo of his hoofs as he toiled along the granite road.

The fragrant scent of the pines, mingled with the sweet breath of the herbs of the mountain, told that the night dew was falling. Over the towering Alps the stars rose one by one ; deeper and deeper fell

the shadows over the valley ; and in that strange, sweet silence I realized the blessedness of knowing *Whom* I had believed.

And now my charioteer stopped. Our ways diverged, but he would willingly have taken me to the inn. My guide knew a footpath which would enable us to reach the house in a few minutes.

With the greatest difficulty I persuaded my Italian friend to accept some remuneration, and he took it so reluctantly that I regretted having pressed it on him.

I lay down on my pillow that night with a peace of God passing all understanding, and rested in unbroken sleep until the sun shone brightly into my little chamber.

In that mountain inn I found unexpected guidance for the next step appointed me, service and testimony awaiting me, and blessing to my own soul.

I had from the first submitted my plans to the Lord. I had seen them defeated ; but He who had heard my sigh of fear and weariness, had also gathered my forgotten prayer, “Glorify thyself.”

Lord ! Thou knowest how often thy servant looks this way and that way, and not unto thee ! Now is my prayer, “Let the will of the Lord be done ! My Father knows best.” And when the way is perplexed and weary, let me wait for thy white ox !

There is nothing secular — all is sacred if carried to Jesus.

I was once much troubled in the north of London with the incivility of the cab-drivers and the discomfort of their cabs : it was not until I was fairly worn out with the annoyance that I thought of my heavenly Friend, to whom I could make known all my grievances. I asked Him to lead me to a cab in the neighborhood, driven by a respectable man, who would be near enough to my lodgings to enable me to engage him without difficulty. A few days later I had walked towards the city, and forgetting my former request I prayed to be directed into the route for a cab. I saw none, and being unable to proceed, a good-natured lad offered to send me the first he met if I would wait. I did wait. The Lord had remembered my petition. In five minutes there arrived a comfortable brougham, driven by the proprietor. He drove me to my lodgings, and finding that I remained there, he asked me if I would like to employ him, as he lived in the mews close by. I did so, and praised the Lord many a day for the convenience and comfort gained by this granted prayer.

Fifteen months afterwards I was at the West End ; I had walked the length of Bruton Street in much distress, not wishing to hire one of the jaded horses that at the close of a hot summer's day passed by.

I paused, hesitating what to do, and said in my

heart, "O, that the Lord would send me a cab and horse, as He did at Islington." My heart melted within me at the remembrance of the Lord's loving-kindness, followed by my regret that I had withheld from *Him* the request of my lips so long. As I crossed the street a coachman with a fresh, strong horse touched his hat to me, and I recognized him as the same man that had driven me for five weeks at Islington. He told me that he had followed me the length of the street, hoping that I should need his brougham, and had striven in vain to gain my attention. He rejoiced my heart by telling me that the books and tracts and papers that he had collected while I employed him, had been in great request through that winter, and not a stableman in the yard but came from time to time for the loan of some of them. I gave him all I had with me, which he gratefully accepted ; and this blessed seal on "whatsoever" strengthened my heart in God.

In the answer to many prayers we receive a literal fulfillment, so that the heart recognizes the exact form of the petition. In others, the spirit, but not the form.

I was once on a brief visit at the house of one to whom spiritual religion was offensive ; I went there unwillingly, for there seemed a blight upon every effort to set forth Christ in that house.

There was a young lady on a visit there, content

with the world, and the world's wages. It seemed a hopeless effort to set the bread of life before one who had no thought but for the miserable husks of the world.

When I retired to my room one evening I was grieved and vexed, my time and strength seemed spent for nought ; and then, more vexed with myself for feeling anything but pity for those who were content without Jesus, I prayed for the young lady.

I complained to the Lord of my inability to offer his blessed invitation to one who saw no delight in it to desire it, adding, "If thou wouldest only make her miserable, *then* I could speak for thee." I passed the night in prayer and conflict, with scarcely any sleep. When I descended to the breakfast-room I found the unpromising visitor my only companion. She avoided me so markedly that my attention was directed to her. Her countenance, generally so assured and lively, was pale and dejected. I spoke to her, but she did not reply ; on pressing her tenderly to let me share her trouble, she dropped her head upon the table, and bursting into tears said, —

"I am miserable, and you are the cause. I feel sure you have been praying for me."

The Lord had heard and answered. He had *shown* me that He had done so to the very letter of my petition. Ah ! then she found "how sweet the name of Jesus sounds ;" and after many a

doubt, and fear, and conflict, she received Him into the heart that *He* had opened. Two days afterwards my visit terminated, and the Lord, withdrawing the instrument, carried on the work without it.

Prayer is hindered by unconscious failure.

I believe that confession immediate upon the consciousness of sin will keep the heart alive to the action of sin.

I had spoken harshly to a friend who was striving to defend Ritualism. I feared I might have weakened my influence for good with him, and I was grieved. As I lay on the sofa early on the following day, I prayed the Lord who had forgiven my sin now to send my dear brother, that I might tell him too that I was sorry for my unkindness. He had called the day before, and he never came more than once in the week to visit me.

The door opened gently, and when I unclosed my eyes I saw my friend standing at the foot of my couch.

"You are surprised to see me," he said, half-apologetically. "I could not keep away."

"No! I am not surprised," I replied; "I was expecting you. I asked the Lord to send you that I might tell you I am sorry for having spoken so harshly to you yesterday."

He was greatly moved and inquired how long I had prayed. I replied, about twenty minutes

before he entered my room. It was the time he was drawn towards the place, and this, I think, showed him experimentally what I tried to press upon him theoretically.

The incidents with which I have endeavored to illustrate the truths which every day's need requires, may appear not worth recording. But nothing is insignificant by which the Lord has received praise, or one of his little ones has found an occasion of thanksgiving. There is joy in heaven over every sinner that repenteth, and surely there is sympathetic joy with every heart that praiseth.

I once had a sojourn of many weeks, while suffering from low fever, in the third story of a hotel, during one of the most dreary periods of my pilgrimage. I was without companionship with any fellow-pilgrim. I had not evident service for the Lord, and, moreover, from weakness I was often unable for that blessed service of prayer or searching the Scriptures, which is, perhaps, best of all.

My room was small, and without any comfort or convenience. Next to it was a fine, spacious chamber intended for two occupants. The space and comfort it promised seemed very desirable to me, too feeble to descend into the fresh air.

I had already striven for it in my own strength, and it had been refused me. But the warm spring advanced, and one day I told the Lord my need, and prayed Him to give me the large room. Never-

theless, I had not the courage to apply for it, fearing that the price would exceed my means. The half-hearted receive nothing from the Lord. Was this the prayer of faith? Rather of *faithlessness*. So this day and the next passed, and on the third day the room was engaged by a new-comer, and by the arrangement of the luggage and unpacking I felt sure it was for a protracted period. O, how faithless I saw myself! Had not the Lord succored and delivered me thousands of times? and yet I doubted if He could give me what I sorely needed — a large room.

I heard my neighbor arranging his effects; it was like a knell to my heart. My little room became more and more stifling by the remembrance of my little faith.

At last I did what I am so slow to do — believed in the *power* as well as in the love of God, and prayed that the occupant of the spacious room might give it up and it might be mine! for I felt the Lord had already given it me, but I lacked faith to take it. Precisely to the time that had been granted me to apply for the room previously, I heard a sound of busy preparation for departure, and the *femme de chambre* told me that the new inmate had taken a dislike to the room and wished for another, and was then removing to an apartment in the *Bel Étage*, more luxuriously furnished, and better suited to his taste than this. I made application for it. It was granted me, not only

without any demur, but without any increase of price ; and the blessing I received in it will be ever remembered.

Surely if the Lord did not graciously accept the desire of my heart to serve Him, He could not bless the work of my *hands*, for I seem most frequently, to myself and to others, to have no service to offer Him. In hope that this may meet the eye of some willing-minded but helpless one, I record the following incident, one amongst many, where I have *seen* the answer of a prayer for which I thought to wait until earth's service had closed for me. "Blessed are they who have not seen, and yet have believed."

I arrived at a new place, helpless as usual, and as little fitted for any service that needed physical strength or mental power. A willing mind was all I had, — this was the Lord's gift, — and beyond the promises of God to believing prayer, and the desire to serve Him, I had nothing more ; but it was enough for his purpose.

It was on my mind to meet with some of the Lord's people, not so much for fellowship, though I greatly longed after it, but for my servant, a young Christian, for whom I desired to find an interest in the somewhat lonely position which our sojourn seemed to promise. The first day of our arrival, therefore, I sent her to visit the cottages around, and I remained to pray that she might be guided to

some poor Christians, if this were the will of the Lord.

She was long absent, so long that I began to feel anxious for her return; for, like myself, she was a stranger in the place. Again and again I committed her to the Lord, for I knew it was on his service I had sent her forth. She returned at length, full of delight at the success of her mission. God is a faithful friend in the dark and cloudy day. She had found an old disciple who could not read, and she had read the Bible to him. Before she had closed, some neighbors joined them, and then she cheered them with one of the joyful hymns which often gladdened that cottage home before she left.

On the following Sunday I sent her to the place of meeting, a little chapel near at hand, and again remained to pray for a blessing on the minister. This I did with such a consciousness of acceptance that I expected some evident result.

My servant related to me that the minister (a stranger) was impressed with the power of the presence of the Holy Spirit, and he invited any soul that was touched by his blessed influence to declare it, and urged any such to wait and speak to him. There was silence; no one answered to the invitation, and the congregation dispersed.

Five weeks after this a friend visited me, and in his rambles came to know a farm laborer recently converted. He gave him my address, thinking it would be as refreshing to me as it had been to him-

self to hear his simple and hearty declaration of justification by faith. One day when my heart was discomfited by surrounding circumstances, and I had forgotten the convert, of whose name and place of abode I was alike ignorant, he called, a messenger of God, to cheer and help me in the path of faith. He could not read, but he had a godly wife and little daughter who could, and it was his delight to hear the Scriptures, which, up to the day of his conversion, he had ridiculed and scorned.

He told me that on a certain evening, at the chapel indicated, he heard a stranger preach, and the words he spoke so moved him that, when he invited any who felt the drawing of the Spirit to declare it, he partly rose to do so. Twice he made the effort, but shame forced him to shrink from the declaration before the people, who knew his wild and dissolute life. Yet his heart burned to tell how the love of the Saviour had constrained him. He returned to his home, absorbed with one thought, that Christ had died for *him*, sinner as he was—that Jesus had forgiven *him*! The conviction deepened, until joy-filled his heart with intensity. He felt impelled to awaken his family, and proclaim what the Lord had done for him. But again and again he resisted it, and the joy departed as before, but never the thought that Christ was the Saviour of all that believed on Him for salvation.

A few days afterwards, his mind filled with the desire to have the assurance forever settled, he

plodded his way with his team over a ploughed field, sad and desponding at his lost blessing.

"I want to be saved," he said, as he walked by his horses. "I think I *am* saved!" hope growing bolder as he dwelt upon the words of invitation — "I *think* I *am* saved!" He had reached the extremity of the rough road, when the certainty of the blessing entered again into his heart, and he exclaimed with a shout, "I am sure I am saved!" With this he threw his arms around the neck of the last horse and wept: "For," said he, "my happiness went near to break my heart! and there for the first time I prayed;" and his tears fell at intervals as he related this to me, mourning for his resistance to the long-suffering grace of the Lord, and the tender expostulations of his loving wife. Comprehension of the necessity of a new life, which would spring from the new heart beneath the influence of the Holy Spirit, seemed to have entered his mind simultaneously with faith in a crucified Saviour.

This conversion was especially precious to me. It was well worth seven weeks' waiting to see the work of the Spirit thus unfolded.

There was a degree of refinement about this man that only grace can give. His manner was gentle and subdued, and bore not a trace of the reckless life which he had lived. Many who had reproved him before, now, like the disciples who shunned *Paul*, whom they had known as "Saul the perse-

cutor," were afraid of him. They could not understand a conversion without doubts or fears, in which the troubled sinner looked for the Spirit of grace to do that work in the heart, which cannot be performed by any effort of man.

The warm-hearted thanksgiving that burst from his lips, as he knelt in prayer, was the expression of one who hungered and thirsted after righteousness with an assurance that it would be given him. It was a *willing* mind, and the gift was *his* who has ascended on high to give gifts to men.

On my arrival in London a letter was brought me from a friend, who was sailing for Australia, begging an answer by return of post, as this was the only hope of receiving it before he sailed. On looking at the date of the letter, I saw that it had been many days awaiting my arrival. Accordingly it seemed useless to write; it was impossible to forward a word of farewell to him before his departure. Then it pained me that he would have looked for it in this hour of trial, and have missed it without knowing the cause.

Suddenly it came to my mind that the vessel might not have sailed, and that the Lord holds the wind and the waves in the hollow of his hand; so I cried to Him to stay the vessel until a word of cheer and strength from Him through me might reach his sorely-tried servant.

As I rose from my knees the Lord gave me faith

to believe that the vessel should not sail without my letter. The wind set in unfavorably for *sailing*, but not for my prayer, and I received an answer full of surprise and gratitude and joy. It had found the outward-bound in prayer for comfort he sorely needed, and he sped on his way with a heart of praise to a prayer-hearing God.

Some prayers may be answered with the minuteness and rapidity of Eliezer's (Gen. xxiv. 45, 46), and some granted in patient continuance of compassing the object of your wishes, ere it is delivered into your hands, like Jericho to its quiet captors. (Joshua vi. 16.) Or, it may be given to united faith, as in the long-suffering endurance of the palsied man and his bearers (Luke v. 20); or the persistent cry of the Syrophenician woman (Mark vii. 29); or the comprehensive faith of the centurion. (Luke vii. 7, 8.) Every phase of experience can find its parallel in the Word of God, the prayerful and continuous study of which will lead the trembling believer to turn to the stronghold, and accept his strength who is ready to give more abundantly than we can ask; and the carnal-minded will learn that the things he has prized as earthly wisdom are foolishness before the prayer of the least child of faith.

The prayer of faith takes you to the feet of Jesus, and prayer for need supplied will keep you there.

“To whom shall we go?”

O, reader, it is to the Friend of sinners I invite you, who loves to hear your voice. Who does not need Him? It is that Divine Man Christ Jesus, whose tears fell at the grave of Lazarus, when the Jews exclaimed, “Behold how He loved him!” It is the pitiful Man, who tenderly bade the multitude sit down on the green grass while He fed them. It is the pure and holy One, who was from the beginning, who can alone pardon the sinner, and bid him go and sin no more. “For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.” (John iii. 17.) It is the Brother on the Father’s throne—the Man of Sorrows in the Almighty God. Prove his power, confide in his tenderness, and every prayer of faith shall unfold more and more of “that eternal life which was with the Father, and was manifested to us.” (1 John i. 2.) Look well to it when there is *no* answer from God. See if there be no false god in thine heart or iniquity in thine hands; for the prayer of the upright is his delight, and the unstable shall not “receive anything of the Lord.” (James i. 7.)

“Said I not unto thee, that if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?” (John xi. 40.)

THE ROCK OF MY HEART.

Shall I shrink and be afraid?
“I will help thee,” Christ hath said.
Shall I flee before the foe
When my arm can lay him low?
Jesus! Rock of strength divine,
Is my watchword, “Christ is mine.”

Shall I sigh for cisterns here
When a fountain floweth near?
Shall I carry life’s sad weight,
Weeping o’er my lost estate?
Nay! salvation’s might shall shine
In my watchword, “Christ is mine.”

III.

THE HEART'S DESIRES.

"The Lord seeth not as man seeth ; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." — 1 SAMUEL xvi. 7.

IT was Christmas-day. In a spacious dining-room sat a girl of about twelve years of age, ensconced in an arm-chair before a bright wood fire. All without was dreary and chill. The snow lay hard upon the ground, and bowed down the branches of the trees, and the gray sky overhead seemed charged with another storm.

Hidden beneath the voluminous sheet of the "Times," the child heeded nothing but the article in the newspaper she was earnestly perusing. Long and seriously the page was scanned ; not a line of the leader was left unread. But it was finished at last, and, after some minutes' thought, she threw down the paper and glanced with a mingled feeling of sorrow and contempt on the luxuries gathered within the four walls. The firelight danced on the gilded pictures and crimson curtains, and her eye wandered from the soft carpet to the cushioned chair, and the child sighed.

The writer of the page that had thus moved her had set forth in no gentle spirit that the sums col-

lected and sent to the black heathen at great expense brought forth nothing — the heathen were heathen still, while our own people were perishing at our doors, without a missionary to reach them. The East of London abounded in alleys and courts, into which our police could not venture. Such were the dangers in these dens of wickedness, where children are educated in depravity, and men and women grow old in crime !

Child ! what canst *thou* do ?

Ah, nothing ! and that was why she sighed so deeply, and said, “ If God had consulted me what He should make me, I would have answered, ‘ Make me a missionary to Bethnal Green.’ ”

The Lord forgave the profanity with the rest of her unnumbered sins, but He remembered the sigh over the perishing ones, that no ear but his heard.

Was it for their souls’ sake that sigh was heaved ?

Not so. The idea of a missionary was of some one to succor the outcast, and be a help to the helpless. The thought of others’ misery made the luxuries of life oppressive ; and though the childish desire was met with ridicule by the cold and careless around her, Bethnal Green was associated in her mind with the idea of sorrow, and want, and shame, of which she partook.

Why have I related this ? Because I have read in it one of the many desires of the heart, begotten ere Christ was manifested to this dark sinful soul,

and granted according to his unutterable love and goodness in his own way and time.

Many, many years went on, leaving me still far from God, without any knowledge of salvation ; and like the poor outcasts of the East of London, no man cared for my soul : Sunday Church-going and fasts and festivals, in the old-fashioned formality, making up the sum of what is commonly called "religion."

But the time came when the Lord would bring me out of Egypt by signs and wonders, and lead me to know the living God. Previous to this joyful assurance, I heard of a work in a ragged school that deeply interested me, from the philanthropy of those who labored in it. It won my reverence and admiration, that these neglected ones should be cared for by young men who spent their only day of rest, their only hours of leisure, to win these rough city Arabs to listen to the eternal truths of God.

I counted it an especial favor when my poor offering unasked was accepted for the work.

Soon after this an asylum for neglected outcasts was brought before me, and won my attention ; but it was long after that ere I knew that either of these places that lodged in my heart and prayers was situated in Bethnal Green. It was not until I was rejoicing in the land of my inheritance that an ear of precious grain was gleaned, and my hand was ordained to send forth my little missionary, "The

Ragged School Boy," which the darkest corner of Bethnal Green was destined to produce. It has gone forth to dreary abodes that the feeble writer could not enter, and to distant lands where she could not travel ; and not many yards from a spot where, broken-hearted and weary of this world's woes, she wept and longed to die, — there was this record of God's grace read to a crowd of Sunday idlers, who listened, and wept, and waited for the preaching of the gospel which followed.

It was while considering the woes of the East of London, that it was brought before me that my prayers and desires had literally been accepted for Bethnal Green. The desire came from God ; it was owned and blessed. All glory to Him who numbers our tears, and counts even a sigh over the poor, who are precious in his sight !

While thus pondering on the past, which is no past to God, I was led back, link after link, to that Christmas-day I have recorded. Thence I traced many a desire, "uttered or unexpressed," which in later days has enabled me to realize that, while still afar from the land to which we are bound, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ and the God of all consolation is leading his children to find their rest in Him. He *knew his* people aforetime, when they groaned beneath the burden of Egyptian bondage. They are the same who believed Him not, who murmured against Him, who doubted if He could spread them a table in the wilderness, who forgot

his works and his wonders that He had showed them ; yet He forgave them, and guided them as a flock, and led them into that "good land," for the possession of which he had delivered them from the hand of the enemy.

The question of answered and unanswered prayer is a fruitful subject of meditation and often of perplexity to the child of God, whose eyes are too frequently bounded by sense, to the judgment of which he seeks to bring the objects of faith.

There are distinct matters for continuous prayer and supplication. God, who searcheth the heart, takes note of its desires. Lord, purify our mind, that all our desires may tend to thy glory.

I have been interested in tracing this in my own life, and not unfrequently I have been permitted to observe it in others also ; and this not only in spiritual matters, but in those which would be called "common" by the man who does not watch for indications of the Holy Spirit's teaching.

Little knowledge or light may have marked the desire ; nay, it may have seemed solely the wish of the natural heart while yet in Egypt ; for the witness of the Spirit may not at that period have testified our sonship. But all that is according to the mind of the Spirit remains before our heavenly Father as the desire of his child, and is a convincing proof that nothing was hid from his searching eye when we were in the far country. The sprinkling of the blood of the covenant has "cleansed from all sin."

Little light had dawned on Cornelius, but “he prayed to God alway.” (Acts x. 2.) And HE who readeth the heart sent unto him a witness of the things he had heard and seen, to preach to him the remission of sins, and the acceptance of his alms and prayers, through a crucified Messiah. It is interesting to remember, that the one whose need was met, and the instrument honored to meet it, were alike in prayer at the time, though one was in assured faith, the other in the morning twilight of revelation.

The Ethiopian eunuch read the Scriptures, but he knew not of whom the prophet spake. The Holy Spirit had begotten the desire for more knowledge, and lo, HE meets the unconscious prayer, and sends him a witness of the truth — one who had beheld the Lamb of God led as a sheep to the slaughter, and who preached unto him Jesus.

God dwells in an Eternal *Now*. “All things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do” (Heb. iv. 13), and I am assured that our love to Him will grow as our knowledge of his tender mercy increases, and we habitually watch for indications of that ever-loving kindness which encompasses his children in all their ways.

I remember a day of deep affliction before I had found the refuge of the Rock. I drove into the country away from the outward turmoil of life, and reached a spot where the wild heath land and pine woods stretched before me for miles. Leaving the carriage at the entrance of the forest, I wandered

on alone, my spirit calmed by the solemn stillness that reigned around, and the soft breath wafted from the fragrant trees. And so I thought that peace was to be found only in these quiet scenes of nature, and if I could have possessed but a cottage *here*, I might find at last that rest in God which seemed elsewhere to have eluded my feverish search.

That my spirit had been subdued and calmed by the tender pity of the Lord acting unconsciously on myself, I have no doubt, for external causes could not have effected it without his will.

The memory of those purple twilight woods has ever since had a close connection in my mind with that unknown God who was so soon to lead me into the "good land" of which then I had not even heard.

Four years had gone by, and trusting in Him who had "shown me great and sore troubles, and brought me up again from the depths of the earth," I went to pass the winter in a place to which I was an entire stranger.

Long was it before I could wander from the cottage, to which my steps had been guided by a remarkable providence.

The winter had passed rich in blessing, my great sufferings often mitigated by the air, and my path brightened by deeper and sweeter realizations of the Lord who had guided me there.

One afternoon in spring, I was able to stroll beyond the high ground which separated the cot-

tage from the pine woods that everywhere surrounded it. Peace and joy unutterable filled my heart as I wandered deeper and deeper into the solitude. I looked from the fern, and moss, and lichen at my feet, to the tall tree-tops where glimpses of the blue sky were visible, and while pouring forth my thanksgiving for the blessings given me in that place, the remembrance of that purple twilight evening came over me suddenly, as if only an hour had passed ; I felt I *had* that for which I then so ardently longed. I had found the cottage in this pine forest, and rest and peace in *Him* whom my soul desired ; no longer to be circumscribed to solitude and suffering for an hour, or a day, or a month, but everywhere, at all times, to know Him I sighed for, the Living God, the Everlasting Father, the Mighty Counselor, the Prince of Peace. Jesus was mine !

Slow had I been to recognize my Lord in this tender recollection of my desire, but never since that day comes the sweet breath of the pines upon the breeze, in service, or in suffering, or in joy, but my soul responds to the message that it carries. "I will lead the blind by a way that they know not."

My natural love of active work has kept my sympathy alive for those who labor. The All-wise Love that chose my position and path, ordained my service ; and when I recognized my appointment in the Royal Household from the hand of my Lord,

though I often coveted a service for which I was unfitted, yet from time to time I have been indulged in work, seldom from special prayer, but from the unexpressed desire of my heart.

One day, in looking from the window of my lodgings, I casually desired some outward service. I was feeling stronger and better. I ~~pondered~~ in my heart what I could do. I had not yet learned "When Jesus wants me He will send for me."

Lost in this thought, my eye was fixed on the road, where some wagons, piled with lately felled trees, rolled heavily by. Suddenly the last stopped. There was a loud shriek, and the rushing of many feet. Almost as quickly as I can describe it, I was in the midst of the crowd that gathered round a youth who had fallen from the wagon, and now lay apparently lifeless. No hand was stretched to raise him, but everyone looked at him. I called for a chair, and bade the neighbors carry him gently to my lodgings. Blood poured from his mouth; he remained unconscious. I know not why, I never once thought of a doctor; I saw only a service sent me by the Lord, and I expected He would enable me to fulfill it.

My landlady, a woman of morose and untoward temper, whose household god was her furniture, did not offer the least resistance when I bade the bearers carry the poor lad into her best room, and place him on a bed which she considered an almost unrivaled manufacture of pink chintz and gold.

We bound up the lad's head and bathed his face, and I prayed to be guided to give him the medicine that was suited to him: his consciousness returned, and soon he slept a long, deep sleep. I had no anxiety. My heart could only praise — not that the poor fellow had fallen, but that the Lord should allow me to do this little service for *Him*.

The following day, some of the youth's family arrived to remove him. Not a bone was broken, and though his head and face were wounded, the bruises were slight.

The following week, dressed in his Sunday suit, my patient called to thank me. I was more ready to thank him for the opportunity of speaking of that gracious Father who gave him natural life anew that he might live to know Him. His heart, softened by the late suffering, appeared prepared to receive the message of mercy.

He lived far distant from the town. I never saw him again. But my heart's desire was granted before expressed, and the uttered prayer was cast into the same pierced Hand through which the first blessing flowed.

Another desire of my heart was for service in the hospitals. I knew no one there in those days who ministered as now in love among the sufferers. I thought my own sickness must have been sent to fit me to minister specially to others, and that some day I should be raised up for this work.

The month of August following found me in Lon-

don. The white-heated atmosphere oppressed many around me, and none of my friends were in town ; but I felt stronger than usual.

One evening I received a note, requesting me to go to the London Hospital. A patient who had undergone a dangerous surgical operation desired to see me immediately.

I was thankful to receive the message, and went. I found a person whom I had formerly known, self-righteous and thus self-satisfied, whose heart (as far as we can judge by words) was as little touched by God's goodness to her in her late preservation as it had been before.

After I had listened to her account of her fortitude and patience, for this appeared the purpose for which she had sent for me, I marked the beds that had no visitor, and, led by Him whose way is perfect, I found what I believe I was ordained to find — a young energetic Christian widow, fretting over what she called her "lost time," her sinking health, and interrupted labor, regarding as little worth a sigh the formidable operation which she had just endured, and from which she had expected immediate restoration.

She was mistress of a wool-shop, which she had been accustomed to close early that she might work among the forlorn wanderers of the streets, to whom especially her mission appeared to be given.

The dear laborer had yet to learn that the Master had need of her just where she then lay, and had

laid her aside to speak with her. It was my privilege to bear her the message of love, and comfort her in the bitterness of temptation which physically and mentally retarded her liberation. I had passed that way myself.

There were other poor sufferers in whom I felt much interest, and for three weeks I was upheld to visit the hospital in freedom from pain. At the end of this time my strength failed. I left London, and again took up my former position of suffering, that left me time to praise for the brief service so graciously accorded me.

The person who sent for me left in the same condition as when I first knew her. She was made the instrument of circulating books and papers for the use of the poor patients, yet received no benefit from them herself. Since those days I have never had an hospital opened to me. But my heart rejoices over, and sympathizes with, the ministering spirits whom the Lord has led to those chambers of pain and patience. He allows us to sow in hope. Let *Him* claim the harvest. The consciousness of his leading and blessing made it a season of grateful remembrance to me, but it was not until I was led to consider the long account of mercies unrecorded that I read therein, "Delight thyself also in the Lord, and He shall give thee the desire of thine heart."

Hospital ministration must be a trustful service. The patients that seem the most eager recipients of

the truth set before them may or may *not* hold it longer than their trial endures ; while others who appeared indifferent may look back on this season of suffering as a time allotted them in preparation to receive the seed of life. All will not fall by the way-side in that wide field of husbandry. Dear laborers, many a jewel ye know not now will shine in your crown of rejoicing, and at the great day lead you to cry, "Who hath begotten me these ?" (Isaiah xlix. 21.) "For thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good." (Eccles. xi. 6.)

What of all these desires that have been denied ? The love which has *not* fulfilled them is as great as that which granted those in which we rejoice.

What child of God does not know the sin (at first, maybe, unconscious, and then conscious) begotten in a thought ? Who has not experienced that a desire of evil cherished *has* been permitted to be realized, that he may learn how grievous a thing it is to depart from the living God ? Has it not ended in our eating of the fruit of our own ways, and being filled with our own devices ? (Prov. i. 31.) "Keep thy heart with all diligence ; for out of *it* are the issues of life." (Prov. iv. 23.) How can we keep it ? In the strength of Him who has said, "All power is given unto me."

One evening, sitting quietly by the fire, I was startled by the sudden explosion of a stone, which

was scattered in burning fragments around me. It caused no small confusion, and when it was over, and all was quiet, and the neuralgic pain had returned with increasing violence, I asked, as I am so often obliged to do, "Wherefore, Lord?" He does not willingly afflict.

Tenderly He led me back to the moment before this had occurred, when I was not delighting "in the Lord," but in my own thoughts that He thus interrupted, which were conceiving sin, and preparing a snare for my foot, darkness for my conscience, and sorrow for my soul.

In his light I saw light, and I praised Him. Thus I have been led to trace, in circumstances which appear trivial and without purpose, a manifestation of the watchful care of Him without whom not a sparrow falleth.

"As much as it was in thine heart," was accepted as a service from David; and many a sigh from the poor and needy for the glory of God is accepted by Him, and worked out by other instruments; while much that is called prayer, in which the desire of the heart has no part, is but empty form.

"The Lord looketh upon the heart," He remembers that we are dust. The sympathy of Jesus is ever towards his own, and He knows that oftentimes the desires granted bring the severest chastening to his children, as they also carry judgment to his enemies. "I will bring evil upon this people, even *the fruit of their thoughts*, because they have

not hearkened unto my words, nor unto my law, but rejected it." (Jer. vi. 19.)

Where then is our security? *Abide in Him*, that we may praise Him that He has given us our heart's desire, and has not withholden the request of our lips.

MY REST.

Thou art my Refuge, Lord: I flee
From other safeguard unto thee.
Now on the breast of love divine
Shelter this weary soul of mine.

Thou know'st the dangers of the road;
Thou seest the dark and foaming flood;
Thou hear'st my solitary moan;
Thou, Lord, canst save me — *thou alone*.

Uphold my feet, so quick to fail,
And in thy strength I shall prevail;
Go thou before me, lead me on
Until the heavenly home be won,

• And I for evermore shall rest
Upon my faithful Shepherd's breast.
How often hast thou marked my track
To bring thy foolish wanderer back,

And from the brambles, where I strayed,
Lifted again my drooping head!
The secret of thy care I see,
Because my Saviour loveth me.

Safe on thy bosom I recline ;
There is no strength but love divine ;
Thence spring my hopes and joys for me ;
Where is my treasure, there shall be

My heart, and thoughts, and riches stored,
Through life's dark road a costly hoard,
Till the wild thicket brighter grows,
And blossoms with the desert rose.

My Light art thou, in life's dark way ;
My Shepherd, when my footsteps stray ;
My Buckler and my Fortress strong ;
My Praise, my Joy, my Life, my Song.

Thy wisdom every day I prove,
And learn thy endless, quenchless love !
By grace upheld, by grace restored,
Thou knowest that I love thee, Lord.

IV.

THE PILLAR AND THE CLOUD.

"At the commandment of the Lord the children of Israel journeyed, and at the commandment of the Lord they pitched: as long as the cloud abode upon the tabernacle they rested in their tents. Or whether it were two days, or a month, or a year, that the cloud tarried upon the tabernacle, remaining thereon, the children of Israel abode in their tents, and journeyed not: but when it was taken up, they journeyed." — NUMBERS ix. 18, 22.

BE of good courage! He who went before his people in their wilderness journey is still before his own. Believe in Him as the God of Israel to-day, not only by word of mouth, but by taking Him at his word, confiding in his faithfulness, trusting in his love, and ye shall find rest unto your souls. "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also." To follow the Lord fully is to find quietness and strength.

That the Holy Spirit does certainly influence the soul to will what is acceptable to the Father, there can be no doubt. The anxiety and carefulness which so often end in confusion, many a time arise from not admitting that He may so dwell in the affectionate, child-like heart, that its spontaneous desire may be the thing that He has ordained; for if we abide in Christ, it is God which worketh in us

to will and to do of his good pleasure. If the eye of faith be taken off its centre, nature chooses for us; and asceticism and mortification may be as much of the flesh, as the pleasures and follies of the world, in which the child of God has neither part nor enjoyment.

To walk uprightly before God we need the power of divine love in the heart, from which alone it springs. The command to be separate (2 Cor. vi. 17) is based upon the possession of the indwelling Spirit, — “What agreement hath *the temple of God* with idols?” “Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.” “Not as though we already had attained.”

He who spake of old time by the pillar and the cloud speaks still. Sometimes by circumstances that lead, at other times by necessities which drive, and also by the gentle drawing of the Holy Spirit. He who led his people like a flock leads to-day. The eyes of the children of Israel were on Moses, and they murmured against *him*. We have our heavenly Joshua; let us keep our eyes fixed on Him, believing that He will guide the sincere follower in the way that He shall choose, and bring him into the place He has prepared. Yet how often it may be said, “Yet in this thing ye did not believe the Lord your God.” (Deut. i. 32.) The servant is prepared to enter on his service by the teaching of

the way, learning day by day his own weakness, and the power of the Lord who has bade him follow Him, the Lord ever manifesting, by the weakest instruments and the simplest means, that the power is his, and his glory He will not give to another.

In a time of great perplexity as to the place in which the Lord required me, I took up my Bible, believing that He would strengthen my heart by meditating on his faithfulness, of which I had had such blessed experience. The taunt of Satan met me : " You will not find Brighton or London in that book." For a moment I paused, startled by the subtle suggestion. But, keeping to my first intention, I opened that precious treasure-house that the evil one hates, and read : " I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not ; I will lead them in paths that they have not known." (Isa. xlii. 16.) It was enough for me. " Here is my direction," I said ; and I waited. I was indeed led by the Spirit through one of those dark passages which are often the way to service and blessing.

I was more than ordinarily exercised in this manner before I left England. Seven weeks had yet to be passed before returning to London. It was quite clear that I must leave the place I then occupied, but where should I go ?

I had no friend with whom I could take counsel ; no one who could or would give me any information relative to the two places that rose in my mind. I had no interest in either of them ; my only desire

was to know to which it would please the Lord that I should go.

Much I prayed that He would manifest Himself in the matter, not only to satisfy my mind, but also for the feeble faith of one who looked on, and who was in the end able to say, "It is the Lord's doings, and it is marvelous in our eyes."

Up to the day of my departure the trial of faith and patience continued. To one of these unknown places, trusting in the Lord, I went.

There was only one lodging in the town that we could discover. This we took possession of; it was very damp and largely tenanted by rats. Its other inconveniences made me shrink from the idea of passing seven weeks in such an uncongenial abode.

I was very ill for many days after my arrival, but as I felt that I had sought to be guided, I believed that I *was* guided. I had not taken this journey for my pleasure, nor even for my health, but solely to do the Lord's will and find the Lord's pleasure.

In spite of outward crosses all within was peace, and I learned therein that this place was chosen by the Lord; but I had received no indication from Him as to the time. The necessity of seven weeks' sojourn was a suggestion of Satan. "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."

Times and seasons the Lord keeps in his own power, and He who spoke to Moses out of the cloud, spake peace to my heart: for as my assurance strengthened that I was where God would have me,

I began to ask Him “Wherfore?” and to desire to see how I could serve Him.

Seeing nothing in the house in which I could be used, I sent for a carriage, and prayed Him to show me how I could serve Him out of it.

The Sunday-school came to my mind ; I collected all the children’s books and tracts I possessed to take there. The superintendent’s name and address I had yet to learn; when I entered the carriage, and told the coachman my wish.

On the way thither we passed the house of a young woman paralyzed, whom I had remarked in an invalid chair. This day she was not in her accustomed place, and I stopped to inquire for her. After waiting a long time, she sent a message to the effect that she would be glad to see me later in the day, as she had not risen.

The coachman then told me his time was up : that he could not take me to the school, as he wanted to meet the down-train in a few minutes. He added, “There is a young Sunday-scholar lying ill close to the station ; I think she would be glad to see you, and perhaps you would spare her a book or two, for she never goes out now.”

I know not how far he desired to facilitate his way to the station, but it was the way of the Lord for me. The driver left me at the cottage he had indicated. Seeing me at the garden gate, a neighbor accosted me, and told me that the parents within, like Jairus, “had one only daughter about twelve years of age, and she lay a dying.”

The poor mother, hearing voices, came to the door. I felt inclined to enter, but learning that the child was insensible, I remained without. The sympathy which God has given us for the afflicted was soon communicated to the sorrowful woman, and she entered into the detail of her grief as if I were not a stranger. "This child is so very dear to me," she said, as the large tears fell from her sunken eyes; "she has been delicate from infancy and at home with me; she was so wise, and in all our affairs when she guided and advised me it was always the right thing to do. On Saturday she sent for her Sunday-school teacher and bade her farewell; she embraced her again and again, and told her that it was her words and her teaching that had led her to Jesus. I stood away from them to hide my weeping, but she knew it, and she said softly, 'Mother! why are you crying? you know that I am only going to heaven.' O, if I could hear her speak once again; if I were sure that she knew me! If she would call me 'Mother' once more, only once! I think I could give her up, and say, 'Thy will be done.' "

I said, "Do you know the promise for all who trust in the Lord?"

"Yes," she replied after a pause, "He says they are *never* to be confounded."

"Can you trust Him to-day?"

"Yes," she replied falteringly; "you don't know what a Father He has been to me for twenty-three

years. Ah, madame, I wish you could see my child, but it is too late now. If she had but said 'Mother' once more," she repeated, despairingly.

I said, "The Lord can do this and more if you will trust Him."

She shook her head sadly, and was silent. Hearing that the child was still unconscious, it satisfied me that there was nothing more that I could do, and the coachman returning from the train left me at the house of the paralytic.

She was an interesting young woman, of superior education. She spoke of the kindness of her husband, and the friends continually being raised up to help and comfort her ; but she was unable to trace it to the Fount of all blessing, and quite ignorant of the way of salvation.

She had one child, a boy of seven, who above all things loved to hear and read of Jesus. He listened intently while I spoke, and the heavenly expression of his intelligent countenance, as he sat with his hands clasped upon my knee, brought back the remembrance of a "child minister" now with the Lord. I saw again how these little ones are set in our midst to preach the everlasting gospel of the grace of God. He neither needs learning nor rhetoric for this, only the loving heart. The child read remarkably well, and with a reverence and intelligence such as it has never but once been my privilege to witness in one so young.

His mother told me that when he came from

school, and found her more than usually suffering, he would bring his Bible and ask her to let him read to her, and his theme was ever the same, — *Jesus the Saviour!*

I read and spoke on Mark iv., and found that only the day before he had chosen that chapter to read to his mother. He listened with intense earnestness as I told him how safe we are with Jesus in the boat.

I felt a real fellowship with the child, and that communion was from the same Spirit, beyond all natural affection ; for it is an eternal bond.

I learnt from him the place of abode of the schoolmaster of the Sunday and day school, and went there. Only the wife, who was a warm-hearted Wesleyan, was at home. She at once thanked God for sending me. She was thirsting to share her joy with some one who knew the loving-kindness of the Lord. She had that morning received a letter from a young nephew, whom she had adopted, and sent to a school at a distance. She told me how hopelessly she had watched him, but she *had* watched ; how faithlessly she had prayed for him, yet she *had* prayed.

He had been lately at home for the vacation. She was disappointed to see that he ceased to find pleasure in anything good. He was less attentive to her husband, less confiding to herself, seeming to prefer to be away from every one. But now all was explained. The Spirit of God was striving with

that young heart, and all was darkness and unrest. He had breathed life into the new creation ; the clouds and mists had rolled away ; the Sun of Righteousness had arisen ; and the night was divided from the day. Her welcome was a song of praise, and her farewell too, and I thanked the Good Shepherd who had guided me where He needed me, to rejoice with them that rejoiced, as well as to weep with them that wept.

The thought of the mourning mother pressed on my heart, and the next morning found me at the cottage door. It seemed improbable that life and speech should pass the Jordan, but nothing is impossible with God.

Satan had fought every rood of the way, bringing before me that it would be greater kindness not to intrude on the first grief of the family ; suggesting that the emotion would cause the suffering in my throat, which, if it did not suffocate me, would add to their confusion and trouble ; and that my desire to call only arose from curiosity to know if our prayer had been granted. It was but the devices of the enemy, and these "may be's" fell before one "shall be" of the Almighty God. (Ps. cxxv. 1.)

I had asked the Lord to guide me where He needed me. He had led me to that cottage, and to that cottage I must go, and leave the result to Him. So I drove to the door.

As the wheels rolled to the garden gate the lately

disconsolate mother rushed out of the house, and between smiling and weeping exclaimed,—

“O ! she knows me ! — she knows me ! She has just called me to her, saying, ‘Mother ! kiss me, mother !’ Do come in and see her now.”

Slowly and noiselessly we climbed the stairs ; yet before we reached the chamber the child had relapsed into insensibility. Death was doing all he *can* do, taking down the earthly tent for the heavenly traveller to exchange it for the mansion in the Father’s house.

It was a large, clean, airy room. The white drapery of the broad open casement floated from before it as we entered ; and the fields, and forest, and woodlands without, in the bright morning sunlight, presented the contrast of earth, and time, and death — within, life, heaven, and immortality !

There was no symptom of disease in the young face that turned towards me. Though from time to time fearfully convulsed, it exhibited even then a rare intelligence. Masses of brown hair hung entangled on her large clear brow, on which the dew of death was breaking ; the pupil of the eye was hidden, so that only the white was visible ; and her mouth, partly open, gasping for every labored breath of life.

Never before had I looked on such a sight ! Above the death agony the peace of God sealed that countenance, on which the glory of heaven seemed already breaking.

I drew near the bed, and bending over the child, in a low whisper I said,—

“Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.”

It was evident to me that she was conscious. The breath was arrested, the moan suppressed, as long as I continued to speak. When I ceased she moaned, and turned uneasily in the direction of my voice. I took my place beside her, and continued at intervals repeating such passages of Scripture as came to my mind. I had no doubt that they reached her ear.

So the hour went on, the valley seemed nearly passed, and the weary little head was still.

I looked around. At the extremity of the room several kind, motherly looking women were seated in silence; some were knitting, but all quiet, and the stillness was unbroken save by the word of God, and the groan wrung in the agony of death from the heaving breast of the dying. I ceased to speak, and looked around on them, when the poor mother said, by way of introduction,—

“My neighbors, ma’am.”

None seemed to see the glory, but all the grief, giving all they had to give, sympathy — the precious balm intrusted to us by Him who came to bind up the broken-hearted, and comfort them that mourn.

These kind women sat there watching the sweet

lamb pass away, and weeping with them that wept.

My heart yearned over them, and kneeling in the midst, I prayed for life in this death chamber from the Prince of Life, who was so nigh unto us.

The women wept silently, and the now subdued grief of the mother, as she gave back her child to God, was a blessed proof of the presence of the Comforter.

O, the mighty power of the last enemy, as he struggled with that blessed trophy that his Conqueror had won from death and hell!

Not a pulse in my heart beat faster. I felt I was *there* where God had sent for me to witness this solemn sight, and behold the Lord Jesus Christ, death's Conqueror, as never before.

The following morning I left by the train. I called on my way at the cottage. The child was in the last agony, and before I reached my destination the river was passed, and the Good Shepherd, who had sheltered her young life from the storms of the wilderness, was leading her to fountains of living water, and wiping the tears from her eyes.

"She is not dead but sleepeth." Thus, though I had not entered the Sunday-school, I had not missed the scholars, or lost sight of that which is so precious in the sight of the Father,—little children brought to Jesus.

Rejoicing in the manifest blessing that had fol-

lowed me in the simple faith of taking God at his word, I again commenced my pilgrimage. This time only *one* place was presented to me ; I accepted it, and after seeking prayerfully the day and hour of my departure from our dreary, uncomfortable lodgings, I left for the train.

It was the first of the month, and the time was altered, which left me two hours and a half to wait for another train.

I was weak and weary, but the gracious dealings of the Lord were fresh in my thoughts. He was teaching me that it was not strength or wisdom that He needed, only a willing heart.

A lady in deep mourning shared the waiting room with me. The woman who attended it recognized me, as having been there two years previously. She told me that the stranger was from her own immediate neighborhood, and that she was in great sorrow, from the sudden loss of three near and dear relatives, within a short period.

I hesitated to accost her, but the way was unmistakably opened, and I found that an anxious desire to know if the assurance of salvation were possible in this life was weighing heavily on her heart.

I could only place before her the scriptural authority for the peace and rest which can only flow from justification by faith. “He that believeth on the Son *hath* everlasting life.” “And ye know that He was manifested to take away our sins ; and in Him is no sin.” (John vi. 40 ; 1 John iii. 5)

She had not seen the necessity of the witness of the Spirit of adoption, either for present peace, or service, or testimony. I had hardly placed the written proofs before her as the Lord enabled me, when my voice failed me, and I was content to feel my service was over, and to pray that He who had begun the work of grace in her soul would finish it in his own time and way.

And now in answer to prayer I travelled some hours alone. Just before the termination of my journey I was joined by a sweet, bright-faced lady. We journeyed long in silence. At last, after a few words of kindness, drawn forth from my evident exhaustion, she took some books from a satchel, and singling one from among them, she begged my acceptance of it. The title of it was, "Which Way?"

I held it in my hands mechanically, without turning its leaves. My heart had gone back to the days when I had first cast my bread upon the waters, and all the wondrous works of my pitiful and gracious Saviour since then came flowing through my mind. My companion, supposing that I had some disinclination to accept it, in a tone of gentle remonstrance, told me that the book had been the means of great blessing in her country home.

I gave it back into her hand, saying, that I was familiar with it— how familiar she did not know! On this she good-naturedly offered me another. My heart was too full to speak ; but I told her I

knew it also. This satisfied her that I was not antagonistic to the truth ; and she proceeded to tell me that the histories of blessing which had flowed through these tracts would take her longer than our journey would last to relate. She lived in a remote country village, with none to sympathize in her labor of love ; and these books had helped her to work and not faint.

I could not honestly listen any longer, and I pointed to my name on the cover of my desk, which lay upon the opposite seat.

She gave an exclamation of delight, and in another moment she had embraced me with a sister's love, telling me how long she had desired to meet me to relate the blessing that had fallen on these pages, written in pain and weakness, and often failing faith, but watered by tears and prayer.

My cup ran over ! It was if my faltering steps were to be assured, and that I was to believe that my Lord could use and bless me without active effort on my part ; thus proving to me, as He did to his disciples, that He could provide for their refreshment without any participation of theirs. (John xxi. 12.) My heart was lifted in praise and thanksgiving, with a longing from its depths henceforth to "follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth."

THE SHINING FOOTPRINT.

Dark the way I wander :
Shall I then go back ?
Nay ! I trace a footprint
On the lonely track,
And I hear a whisper
(Sweeter could not be),
“ Lo, I go before thee,
Rise ! and follow me.”

So I rose up quickly,
With my staff in hand,
Gath’ring strength in rising
At my Lord’s command ;
Yet I thought (half sighing),
“ Not a step I see ! ”
“ On ! ” He said, “ the darkness
Hideth not from me.”

For a while I lingered
Still on sunshine bent ;
Not a ray broke o’er me,
All the way I went ;
But upon the waters
Seemed that step to be ;
O’er the billows whispered,
“ Come, and follow me.”

There were thousand footprints
On my way before,
Free and far they wandered,
On that sandy shore.
One, unlike all others
In its lucid light,

Left a path of glory
Through the gloomy night.

By the stormy waters,
In the busy street,
Through the dreary alley,
'Mid the crowding feet,
Gleams that shining footprint,
All may seek and see ;
And the voice of Jesus
Whispers, " Follow me."

Lord, keep thou my footsteps
Very near to thine,
That some ray of glory
On my path may shine ;
Nearer and still nearer
Draw my heart to thee,
Lest I lose thy whisper, —
" Come, and follow me."

V.

UNANSWERED PRAYER.

"We know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because He maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God."

— ROMANS viii. 26, 27.

WE have considered the desires of the heart never formed into conscious prayer, and special supplication answered to the letter, and need met in answer to prayer, according to the way of the Lord. Let us for a while consider unanswered prayer.

There is no need unimportant for the child of God to bring before the notice of his heavenly Father, who "fainteth not, neither is weary" with his continual requests. Nothing is beneath *his* care who counts the hairs of our head; but He has often taught me that there is something as good as granted prayer, and that is prayer rejected. This I began to remark after the following incident.

I walked in the direction of a village near to my lodging, when the dark clouds gathered on the sky and threatened a storm. I paused and prayed to be guided whether I should proceed. I was then midway. I had no umbrella, and there was not any

• shelter on the road ; therefore I prayed earnestly that I might return if the storm were about to break, as I had no protection from it. The clouds seemed drifting before the wind, and I felt assured that, as I still felt led to go on, I should gain my lodgings again before the storm would break.

I reached the village, transacted the business for which I came, and was passing the last of the houses, when the storm burst fiercely, and I rushed for shelter to the first open door, wondering in my heart why I had not been directed to return to my lodgings, where at that time I should have been in safe harbor. More uneasy at these unbelieving thoughts than in the outward circumstance, I looked into the pitiless storm with a troubled heart, when a low, subdued voice from within entreated me to enter, and not stand in the draught of the door. It was a boot and shoe warehouse, with an inner room, wherein was seated a widow at her books making up her accounts. Her mourning was fresh and new, and the distress of her countenance at once drew forth my pity. She invited me into her little parlor, and placed a chair for me ; she then took her place again at the table, and resumed her occupation.

I said, “‘Let their widows trust in *me*.’ Are you trusting in the widow’s God ?”

She started, and with sudden vivacity replied, — “I do, I do ; but *my* trouble is so great. Mine is such a peculiar trial,” and, as she looked in my

face thankful for the sympathy, I saw her eyes were red and swollen with weeping.

Surely it was the Lord who opened her heart to spread her woes before me. I showed her it was Satan's plan to harass and bewilder her in her sorrowful circumstances, more severely felt from her loneliness and grief.

When I had said this she exclaimed, as if new light had broken on her darkness, —

"Ah, if I thought this was not *my* doing, but Satan's temptation, I could *pray* more than ever." We went over the affair quietly together, and she was cheered and comforted. I hardly think that the widow rejoiced more in her deliverance than *I* in tracing the hand of my God in giving me something better than I could have asked or expected. The storm ceased, and I turned from the house of shelter blessing the Lord for a rejected prayer.

A week or two went by, and I paid a visit to the widow. The trial had passed, and left a harvest of blessing. She told me that she dated a new era in spiritual life from that darkest day of her affliction, and not only that, but in temporal things also she had found the widow's God !

"If it is good in *thy* sight," my often willful heart has paused to plead, when I have prayed for something that seemed good in *my* sight. "He that believeth shall not make haste."

Often we serve, when we know not that we are

serving ; but the *heart* must be still in the path of obedient watchfulness, and then the project that seems to have failed utterly, and the disappointment of what appeared a good thing to us, shall work together for good, in that God has prepared something better for us than we can ask or think.

“God looketh on the heart,” and if the ruling desire there be for his glory, and love towards his beloved Son (John xvi. 27), prayer is answered in reference to it ; for it is the mind of the Spirit. Thus we should see that many a petition that seems to tarry has been bountifully met, if we meditated on these things, and gave ourselves wholly to them. (1 Tim. iv. 15.) Then in the ramification of prayer granted, though otherwise than we anticipated, we should be able to adore the faithfulness of Him who promised, “If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.” (John xv. 7.)

“His words” will teach what we may persistently ask for, and if we say, “We know not,” “his words” are not abiding in us ; for He has said, “If any of you lack *wisdom*, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him ; but let him ask in faith, nothing wavering.” (James i. 5, 6.) Oftentimes the answers to our prayers are knocking at our doors, yet we hesitate to give them entrance ; and like the midnight watchers whose prayers had opened the prison doors for Peter, we are “astonished.” (Acts xii.)

In regard to unanswered prayer, there is much I can look back upon which, but for the grace of God, would overwhelm me in confusion ; but “this is the confidence that we have in Him, that, *if we ask anything according to his will*, He heareth us : and if we know that He heareth us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him.” (1 John v. 14, 15.)

Many a time we can praise God that He did not answer the prayer that seemed a needful blessing, and there are some petitions for which we must wait to understand why his love and wisdom denied them. (John xiii. 7.)

There are other causes for unanswered prayer. When Saul inquired of the Lord, *He answered him not that day*, showing that there was some *cause* for his silence ; therefore Saul was led to search and see what sin had been committed. (Compare Ps. xviii. 21 ; Prov. v. 22.) He had received no command from the Lord to require the people to fast, and the rash vow, like Jephthah’s, returned on himself by falling on his child.

The thorn in the flesh, for the removal of which Paul besought the Lord thrice, was as necessary for the perfecting of the inner life of the Apostle as the revelation of the third heaven. Yet it was a messenger of Satan, and it seemed as though he might reasonably have expected an answer. (2 Cor. xii.) But the Lord does not apply the explanations of the denial of his petition to reason, but to faith. “ My

grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness." And before the record of God's dealing closes, we see the fruit of unanswered prayer — the fruit unattainable by the natural man ; namely, taking " pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake ;" and many a time have we thus seen instead of the thorn spring up the fir-tree, and for the brier the myrtle.

Samuel cried to the Lord all night in behalf of Saul. He had not the mind of the Lord, but the Lord gave him another service, even to anoint as king the man after God's own heart. But when Samuel prayed for thunder and rain (1 Sam. xii. 17) in the wheat harvest, the Lord heard and answered, because the prophet *had* the mind of the Lord.

Again, we may have been sleeping, or wandering from our true position, or have fallen into a snare, and we cannot rise up suddenly, and "go out as at other times before." The secret of our strength is departed from us, and we are weak as other men, who never have known what it is to walk in communion with a living God. The first sense of failure may well lead us to see our eternal loss in prayer restrained, or hindered by sin, or slothfulness, or unbelief.

Another cause of unanswered prayer is forgotten mercies. This was taught me by a young Christian servant who wrote to me, "I am so glad to have

received your letter. Many times I wondered why I never heard again ; all at once I remembered I had never praised God for the last kind letter you had sent me. I had no sooner done so than I had my wish granted, and I had another.” Forgetfulness of mercies received yesterday saps our faith in mercies expected to-day.

If we diligently cultivate a large tract of new land, we must see some return of harvest. So if our prayer is spread over a wide field of service, there will always be sufficient proof of the Lord granting our prayer, to fill the heart with confidence and thanksgiving. For much still ungranted we shall learn to trust Him, and for prayer rejected we may be assured that at *that* day, when the secrets of all hearts shall be judged, we shall justify God in all his dealings, and praise Him for the prayer He has denied. “Be not afraid, only believe.” Believe in the goodness of Him who gave his Son ; in the love of Him who is at the right hand of God with every petition of his failing people ; believe in the power of the Spirit to work his will and reveal his mind.

There are some cases of prayer in which we *know* we have the petition, or rather that it is well pleasing in his sight with whom we have to do ; there are others where, if we had subjection to his will, we should save ourselves much anxiety and subsequent disappointment.

I remember pleading “whatsoever” in a matter that seemed good to myself, and which I designed

for service to the Lord — pleading it unreservedly — and it was denied. Why? Because it was not according to the mind of the Spirit. But the Lord allowed me to see my ignorance and self-will, and to accept my service according to his way.

The evening before I left a place to which I have never since returned, an opportunity offered — the last — of giving a copy of the Scriptures, and speaking to a foreigner on his position as a dying man without God and without hope. I knew his pride would rebel against this, and my only prospect of a hearing was in obtaining an interview with him alone. Accordingly I prayed for it, and as it was my own apartment, there appeared no difficulty to the desire that we should not be interrupted. Again and again I committed it to the Lord, for our conversation would have to be carried on in a language of which he understood very little, and I was totally ignorant of his.

A message was brought me, intimating that a gentleman, at that very hour, would call to take leave of me. It was too late to send a reply, but I threw myself on the power of the promise that had so often delivered me, and pleaded it persistently before the Lord. Nay, even when I heard the steps of my visitor on the stairs, I did not despair that it would be answered. Yet I saw *both* enter my room together, with the consternation best understood by those who, like myself, have sought to serve the Lord in their own manner, and failed. We sat a

few moments in silence, for I was bewildered. My time was short ; early in the morning I was leaving ; the last opportunity of speaking for my Saviour was passing. But the murmur in my heart was stayed by my visitor saying, "I found you would not be alone ; I thought I might be of use to you as interpreter ; for I speak both languages as easily as my own."

So trusting in the Lord to keep down the pride of man, and to subdue my will to Himself, I simply said what I had to say of *Him* who was precious to me. So far from another listener impeding the conversation, he assisted it. My heart warmed at the evident sympathy of my visitor ; I knew how carefully my words were translated, by the answers given, the subject deepened, and the evening passed with such a manifest consciousness of blessing to my own soul, that I even forgot the disappointment of my prayer denied.

In the morning, before I could leave the house, my kind interpreter of the evening before came to bid me farewell, and to thank me as the poor and unconscious instrument of blessing to himself. I have never had any sign that my words were blessed to the other. It is a simple incident, perhaps not needing to have been related, except as an illustration of prayer denied in its *form*, and accepted in its *spirit*.

Many a time my heart would have failed me had

I known for what I was asking, and as often should I have been bewildered had I understood how costly would be the answer to some broken and imperfect petition. Let us, while we can, keep our hearts fresh with remembered mercies. There are deep waters and dark valleys ; there are conflicts with the powers of darkness, and snares and nets for the feet of the pilgrim stranger. The remembrance of yesterday's mercies will lead us to trust to-day, and the heart that loves praising will often raise the song for answered prayer.

In a household where I dwelt for a few weeks, my interest was awakened for a youth who was employed as groom. One day he took the place of the coachman to drive me to the neighboring village. I seized the opportunity of speaking to him of Jesus. He answered me insolently, and flogged the horse so violently, that we were in much danger. I did not experience the least fear ; the thought of his conversion alone filled my mind. When I left the carriage I felt compelled to warn him. His countenance was inflamed with rage and scorn, and his answer full of contempt and hatred. I said to him, " You will some day remember the words I have said to you. You think, because you are young and healthy, that death and judgment are far from *you*. It may be nearer to you than you think. Death comes to the young sinner as well as to the old." And so I left him, praying that he might remember my words.

On the following Saturday evening I missed the servants from the house, and when they returned they explained their absence. The groom had climbed a tree in sport, missed his footing, and falling on a sharp wooden spike it had pierced his body, and all hands had been employed to place him in a cart on a litter of straw to convey him to his home.

I went to see him, and found myself in a cottage by the same bed where two years before I had stood by his dying mother, whose protracted death struggles had been used to preserve my life, by preventing my journey in a train which ran off the line.

The youth was subdued and touched, but he gave no sign of change of heart, though he remembered my words.

Let us believe that our heavenly Father can and will give what his child really needs, even to the desire of the heart, for “the Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand.” (John iii. 35.)

Nothing but entire confidence in God Himself, and dwelling on his wisdom and love, can reconcile the mind to the prayer which we know is *not* delayed but denied.

The sickness that we prayed might not be unto death, and yet it was! The birth of the soul which we longed for, that was not born again, but sank in silence. The catastrophe that we prayed might be

averted, which was not averted. O, these are among the fiery trials, which seem "strange" to us, until we can rest our bleeding hearts on Jesus only. These are the hours when the adversary stirs up the faint and weary watcher to murmurs of rebellion, if, absorbed by his own disappointment, he forgets one who does not willingly afflict. It is one thing to repeat, "Thy will be done;" it is another when the heart itself lays down its dearest hopes — its cherished desire — and takes the cup from the pierced hand of the Man of Sorrows. Then we leave the solution of the mystery, until we behold Him as He is, and we are *satisfied*.

Lord ! I fain would love thee more,
Learn thy precepts, do thy will,
Seek thy dealings to adore,
Trust thy wisdom, and be still.

I believe thy love to me,
Seen in all thy wondrous ways :
Shall my heart as marble be,
Cold and silent in thy praise ?

Oft I say, "For *me* He died,"
Yet my sinking spirit grieves ;
Let my foes in darkness hide
For I know my Saviour lives.

Lives ! his weakest one to bless ;
Lives ! the burden of my song ;
Lives ! a fount of blessedness ;
Lives ! to love me all day long !

Once I wept my thorny road,
Once I mourned my weary feet ;
Now He takes my lightest load,
And He makes my service sweet.

Lo ! the Hand I pierced, I see,
Opens wide my Father's door ;
And on high to plead for me,
Jesus lives for evermore.

VI.

THE WILLING MIND.

"For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not." — 2 COR. viii. 12.

"I AM so weak that I cannot pray."

These words, in deep emotion, came falteringly from the lips of a beloved brother, laid low by the sickness which was the angel messenger to convey him to our Father's house. "I cannot pray!" and the expression on the pale, haggard face turned towards me seemed to anticipate either grief or astonishment in mine.

"Jesus prays for you," I replied.

"True," he continued, sadly, and he shook his head; "but you know prayer is my duty and my privilege, and I *cannot* pray."

"When your dear son lay helpless and suffering on a bed of fever, did you think he loved you less because he could not tell you so? Would it not have pained you that he should lack anything because he could not ask for it, and that he was mourning lest you should misunderstand his silence?"

We neither of us spoke for some minutes, and then, like a cloud before the sun, the shadow passed

from his anxious face, and with a warm pressure of the hand he exclaimed,—

“It is precisely so! I never thought of that before. It is a *Father’s* heart we have to deal with.”

Rest and confidence again in a Father’s love, through the experience of his own strong parental affection, revealed the secret of peace to the troubled soul. To *believe* in that love in each dispensation, and to trust it fully for the power to glorify Him in it, will bring us into the position He has designed for us, though that position cause us amazement.

If we were willing to receive and not restless to give in the hour of new and unexpected trial, we should hear what God the Lord saith in it; and if we had yet to wait for this, we should be taken out of the “imagination of the heart” to watch for Him.

The active efforts of my now dying friend to spread the Gospel had for many years kept his mind and pen fully occupied, and his gentle Christian character had won for him the esteem and love of his brethren. Now he was laid aside, and the darkness with which overwrought nerves and sleepless nights can cloud the mind were his portion equally with those whose time had not been so sedulously devoted to the Lord’s service. A willing heart to serve and suffer he had long given, but this season of inaction appeared to teach him a

deeper confidence in Him who knows the hearts of all men, and needeth not that any should tell Him, who giveth liberally and upbraideth not, and whose love knows no shade nor shadow of turning.

We need a belief in the sympathy of our blessed Lord. The human heart of the Man of Sorrows is on the throne of our Father, and "that same Jesus" is not ashamed to call us brethren. He gives according to the *real* need, whatever that need may be, and does not offer the theory of wisdom to the head, when the heart is nigh to breaking.

When Jesus saw the people who followed Him faint with hunger and fatigue, He did not say to them, "I am the bread of life," but bade them sit down, and by his power satisfied their hunger. When He stood by the cavern grave of Lazarus, He did not tell the mourners to rejoice that sickness could no more reach their loved one. "Jesus wept." And this is written for our learning. It is the every day's need which calls for the every day's help, and that which was used for our consolation or guidance yesterday has no power to supply to-day's necessity; but the sympathy, and wisdom, and love, and power of the Son of God can meet them all, either by the action of the Spirit without human intervention, or by his sending a messenger to bless and be blessed in his service.

The heart may be willing to hear, but are you willing to do and to suffer according to the will of

God? Herod feared John (not God), knowing that he was a just man and a holy, and when he heard him he did many things, and heard him gladly. (Mark iv.) But when a lower influence pleases his senses, and a dancing woman delights him, at her request he sends an executioner into the prison and puts to death the man who was a living witness for God.

We are told that the king was "exceeding sorry," but he commands the sentence of death all the same. The word that he had heard gladly did not affect his actions, and his sorrow of heart did not change it.

Had the Baptist been content to deal in generalities, his enemies would have suffered him to live; but God's faithful witness had denounced sin, and therefore he must die. There are those who are magnified in their office, perhaps, for the novelty or excitement of some "new thing," but who, if faithful to the truth, must suffer many things; but though the heart be faint and weary, if it be a "willing heart," it is accepted, though it be to suffer, and not to *do*.

There is always a sphere for the willing mind, however helpless the instrument may appear to itself. It is not nature that glories in our infirmities. We know by the record of Paul's experience, and also by the work of the weak ones in the vineyard, that "when I am weak, then am I strong." The Lord wants his praying people where they are, or

He would not have placed them there. He knows best, and let us not think that we could choose better what will be for his glory than Himself, the All-wise and the Almighty.

When there is no evident present service, past labor may be widened and deepened by prayer. The book or letter written, the tract or text given, the testimony, however slight, and frequently less clear and definite than it might have been, all may be brought again for blessing to Him who promised Samuel that not a word of his mouth should fall to the ground.

The Lord Jesus Christ is a gracious Giver, and not a hard Master ; and not one sigh for his glory hath perished or ever will perish. Were it not for this, the weak and feeble ones who tarry at home could not divide the spoil, and in the great harvest day the strong men who were seen in the battle would claim all the golden sheaves. But we know it is not so : the willing mind hath its sowing and its reaping, by watching and waiting and prayer.

I had been pleading with the Lord for blessing on two of my earlier books, in one of which was the hymn, "I have a Friend, a precious Friend." On taking up "The Christian" a week afterwards, I read an extract from a report of a laborer in Golden Lane, London : —

"Mrs. D—— was awakened by a dream repeated three times, in which the Good Shepherd appeared,

and led her to the Mission. As she entered, we were singing the hymn, —

‘I have a Friend, a precious Friend.’

The Saviour said to her, ‘I am that Friend,’ and she awoke. She came to the service that day for the first time, and singularly enough, as she entered, we were singing the words quoted above. This was to her a token for good. She is now a follower of Christ.”

And for the other book, a letter reached me from a lady, a foreigner, giving me the glad news that it had been blessed in awaking her from darkness to light, and her song was, — “One thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see.” (John ix. 25.) The Lord had listened to the voice of my prayer, and though I do not suppose that these were the only blessings that flowed from it, it was enough to send me on my way rejoicing, and to lead me to continue “instant in prayer” for the early and the latter rain.

Many who appear of great service in the vineyard, because more demonstrative and acknowledged by men, and because of the natural energy which makes the service more evident, will be but little ones in the kingdom of grace. God “taketh not pleasure in the legs of a man.”

Though one may have a powerful voice to sing the praises of the Lord, that praise does not enter into his ear more acceptably than the feeble

stammering strain of another, who by nature has no voice for harmony, but whose heart is full of his sweet music. The flower of grass will be burned up.

Evil cannot enter into the holy sanctuary ; feeble-ness may, however feeble. The seeds of everlasting flowers sown here will germinate, though no blos-som may be seen ; but there is another climate, where they will bloom in beauty.

“Your life is hid with Christ in God.” The instruments given you are suitable to the work to which you are called. The lights and shadows of the heavenly life can no more be dispensed with than the rain and winds of the natural earth. “The Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.” Life’s circumstances become land for tillage, and a will-ing mind makes a good laborer.

There may be an old man, with a name of being rich, who is in reality very poor. It is true, he has the gift of a valuable estate, but he has never taken possession of it ; he knows nothing of it ; he has never dwelt upon it ; he has done nothing to culti-vate it ; it produces no revenue. What is he the better for it ? He may as well not have had it ; nay, perhaps after all he has no assured claim to it, and he calls it presumption when he hears of the inheritance claimed by the people of the land. Such are not the fathers, whom John exhorts ; yet is it said, “Every place whereon the sole of your foot shall tread shall be yours.” Let us go up, treading mountain, and valley, and hill.

There may be a young man with an estate in the same country, who enters upon it without delay, to prove that it is *his*. He gathers oil from the olive, and grapes from the vine, and causes the mountain to deliver up its ore. The vineyard flourishes, and the grain, though still in the ear, is abundant; and he labors with the patience of hope, for he knows it is the land of promise. “A land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills, and drinketh water of the rain of heaven; where he eats bread without scarceness, and out of whose mountains he can dig brass.”

The “little children” knew that their sins were forgiven. The “young men” were in the battle, wrestling not against flesh and blood, but against spiritual powers. The word of God abideth in them, and they overcome the wicked one, knowing that He who called them to the conflict is “able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing that He ever liveth to make intercession for them.”

The father, once the child and the young man, inherited the promises through faith and patience, not being slothful but believing; yet even to him John writes the warning, as he exhorts the little children.

Are you willing to take possession of your inheritance in the way the Lord appoints? to enter the valleys, and work in the mine, and plough up the

fallow ground, as readily as gather in the fruits of harvest, and bask on the sunny mountain? God asks a willing heart; have you given it?

There is a consciousness of having desired to please God, in serving Him diligently, that leaves, or should leave, a peaceful confidence in Him. That desire, however ignorant, is the expression of our love, and it is accepted, although we have not succeeded in bringing it to completion; the Lord says, "As much as it was in thine heart."

Mary and the other women designed honor to the body of the crucified Jesus, when they brought the sweet spices to the sepulchre. Had they believed the words of the Lord when He was with them, they would have known that He had risen. Yet the love that inspired the thought was accepted, and even rewarded, first in the privilege of carrying the tidings of the resurrection to his disciples, and then in their beholding Him whom they loved and mourned. As they journeyed to the garden-grave they spoke together of Jesus. And though the difficulty arose, "Who shall roll us away the stone?" yet it impeded them not. They were permitted to go forward. The Lord knew it was *Himself* they sought. The angels soothed their dismay with words of comfort. "Fear not ye! for I know that ye seek Jesus which was crucified." They were terrified at the means by which the stone was rolled away, but it had not affrighted them as an insurmountable obstacle to their offering the last tribute of affection. (Matt. xxviii. 5)

It is ever thus—with those whose hearts are set on “Jesus only;” no obstacle deters them, no difficulty arrests their progress. How tenderly does the compassionate God-man meet the desire of his loving followers. The angel does not bear a message of rebuke for their unbelief of their Lord’s declaration, that on the third day He should rise again; but He prepares them to witness to the things they have heard and seen, and to be the bearers of glad tidings to others. Even their human affection and faith are assured,—“Come, see the place where the Lord lay.” And when they had beheld the confirmation of the words, He gives them a higher service than they had designed for themselves: “Go your way, tell his disciples, and Peter, that He goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see Him as He said unto you. Then they went out quickly.” With the certainty that they should again behold Him whom they love, they leave the empty grave to carry the glad tidings of a risen Saviour.

Thus we ignorantly long for health and strength and wealth to fulfill some service we design for our Divine Master. The Searcher of hearts beholds the love which inspires the wish; He does not rebuke the ignorance and little faith which render it abortive, but makes use of it in preparation for service which He needs, in which the energy of affection can find a more essential and effectual sphere.

Did you seek to *honor Jesus* in the work which has failed? and are you mourning over your helplessness in the great harvest-field? Nay! it is the *same* Jesus who remembered Peter in special tenderness, and who called Mary by name. His divine compassion fails not, though we are ignorant and unbelieving. If faith is weak, He will strengthen it with renewed expressions of his changeless love.

Take courage then, ye little ones of the flock; for Jesus chose not one of the strong men who had been with Him in his three years' ministry to proclaim the news, neither a seraph from the heavenly height of glory, nor one of the host of angels who watch around the heirs of salvation. The messengers are women, whose little faith failed to apprehend Him in all his divine power and revelation, but who "loved much" the beloved Son, in whom the heavenly Father was "well pleased." Only believe, and however you may be disappointed in the labor you longed to perform for his sake, remember there is One who gathers the motive; for, "the Lord is a God of knowledge, and by Him actions are weighed." The blessing is not lost. If the heart is willing, circumstances are no obstacles to the labor of love.

In one of the long sicknesses in which I have experienced so much of the tender sympathy of my Lord, He placed me in lodgings overlooking the beautiful Cove of Cork. My bedroom, which was

spacious, and on the second story, had two large windows, which opened to the balcony. I knew not what a tide of blessing and teaching was to flow to me through those windows, passed only by a bird on the wing, as I lay for many days in that curtained chamber. Time came when from my couch I could see the vessels as they arrived in the harbor, and follow the outward-bound with my eye. The ocean beyond the Cove, the sloping hills, green with the budding larch, the verdant coasts,— all were visible.

The spring had broken on us. I was feeling my weakness of body, and bitterly bemoaning my abject nothingness. The Lord had led me into one of the valleys of that “exceeding good land” which was part of my inheritance, but I had not taken possession.

There were days when the heart-longing to be able to go forth, or take any part in the service of Him I had so recently found, saddened my way. I closed my Bible one morning, unable to decipher a word; writing was equally impossible; I could not even employ my hands. Then it was that the sympathy of my gracious Lord was manifested for my help in a new and unexpected manner. My thoughts went out to the scene which met my eye, and I learned lessons that only the Spirit of light can teach.

I turned from the effort of writing; my hand fell wearily down, forgetting (and then I had but little

experience of the Word), "As thy day, so shall thy strength be."

God had not forgotten me, though I had forgotten my only source of strength. I turned hopelessly from the attempt to labor, and rested my eyes on the scene without. It was one of those changeful April days when gleams of light and shadow bring forth new or at least undiscovered features in the landscape, and have less sameness than many a sunny scene upon a foreign shore, often too dazzling for the eye to dwell upon.

I marked a tiny vessel go forth, but all in shadow. I had observed her among the craft that crowded the harbor seeking shelter from the late violent hurricane. She went on alone for some time. Soon other vessels followed her. A light wind swept over the waters. She put up her sail, the breeze filled it, and the light brightened it. She tacked, and distanced all the large and heavy vessels, and fled like a sea-bird over the waves. "*Not by might, nor by power; but by my Spirit, saith the Lord.*" I saw that it was indeed for me, yet the light seemed not to shine upon my way, nor the breath of the Spirit to breathe consciously upon my listlessness.

But my eyes were often turned to the harbor. A steam-tug passed, and in the afternoon I saw her return, bringing in two deeply-laden sloops, damaged in the late storm. She came slowly along. The waves were now rough, and the freight heavy. I watched her as she breasted the tide, and as she

toiled by my window I read upon her stern, *The Willing Mind*. Scarcely had the words met my eye when new courage rose in my heart. I bent my ear to the lesson. It was the “willing mind” that is accepted — that which a man *hath*, and not that which he *hath not*. God accepteth the heart willing to serve, willing to suffer; and thus can every soul bring forth fruit to the praise and glory of the Lord.

And so while this April day with outward sunshine had dawned on my soul’s fruitless yearnings for health, and strength, and service, in the cloudy noon I lay in meek subjection, by the power of the Spirit. When the sun went down there sailed forth the last merchant vessel that had sheltered in the harbor from the storm. Mast, and spar, and cordage glistened like burnished gold; the sails became whiter in the light; every wave over which she bounded reflected the glow of the sunset; she passed into the ocean lost in the glory of light, and I felt it was the type of resurrection life. My heart sang, “Seek the Lord and *his* strength; seek his face evermore.”

I had done nothing. I had no human counselor or friend to say, “Be of good cheer;” but as my day, so was my strength. My weak and weary heart was strong, and light, and cheerful; for the Spirit of Truth had shown me that “the Lord loveth a cheerful giver.” That day, among many passed in that chamber of suffering and weakness, is graven on my memory.

The heart naturally turns to the *instrument* of blessing, no matter what or who it may be. So the next day I looked forth from the same windows through which I had received these lessons, but a heavy sea-fog had fallen, and for three days all was darkness and stillness ; I could *see* nothing, but I remembered *The Willing Mind*, and that all the vessels, safely moored, were waiting, like myself, for the time to go forth. My hopes had failed, but God's plans are never defeated, and in the shadow of his wings I was learning to rest.

On the third day at sunset the fog appeared suddenly rent in twain. The distant hills and coasts were visible. Vessels coming in with the tide, nay, even the sunlight on the ripple of the water, were seen. It was like a glimpse of my distant home beheld through the veil rent for me.

Many an otherwise weary hour passed, full of peace and blessing drawn from the hitherto unconsidered symbols which were full of teaching to me. The ensigns of various nations, the weighing of the anchor, the varied positions of the craft, the lading and unlading of vessels in the port, from that day showed the power of the Holy Spirit in giving speech and language to common things, and testified to me of his goodness in meeting every need of the soul in these heavenly parables.

In another place where I was a prisoner of the Lord, I was occasionally visited by a minister, whose deep pity was called forth by my suffering and weak-

ness. He always prayed for me. His prayer consisted in supplication for health for me, to enable me to go forth to serve the Lord. Months went by; he did not see his prayer answered.

One Sunday morning, with my sofa drawn close to the high window, I watched him descend the hill which led to the church in which he was accustomed to minister. I was thinking of solitary ones like myself, unseen in this hour of worship by all but Him whose "eye seeth every precious thing." I glanced at the young preacher walking rapidly towards the church: the bell had long ceased, the doors were closed, not a loiterer was in sight. I had not seen him of late: I felt my spirit drawn out specially in his behalf. I asked the Lord not to permit him to enter the door until He had bestowed on him the blessing I sought for him.

When I again lifted my eyes, I was surprised to see him still standing in the porch. I know not that I ever pleaded for him as I did at that time. My hands fell; my prayers ended; he entered the church.

The next day he visited me. I inquired of him, "Why were you so late yesterday? And will you tell me why you did not enter the church when you found how late you were?"

His face flushed; he was silent; and in turn he inquired how I should have known it. I told him the circumstance. He was greatly moved, and with that frankness which has often helped me to understand the ways of the Lord, he replied, —

"I was quite forgetful of the hour. I found I was late ; this disturbed me. I thought to wait a little in the vestry to regain my composure. When I arrived the door was locked ; neither could I find the man who had the care of the key. I was vexed and annoyed. Indeed I needed to wait ; I was not fit to enter."

From that day he left off pitying me. He seemed before this not to recognize any place in the King's household for one as helpless as Mephibosheth, who, nevertheless, sat at the King's table. This simple fact opened my way to testify of that spiritual service which is given to all who wait upon the Lord, and not without blessing.

It is better to learn for one's self, even if it is in loneliness and suffering, than to receive the second-hand opinions of others. Soon after I knew Christ as my Redeemer, a Christian paid me a visit. With the best intention of doing me good, he suggested that I ought to recover, if I were not living in some unrepented sin.

This startled me not a little. The love of God hourly manifested for my consolation ; infinite power and wisdom daily exhibited in my behalf ; the smile of his favor, which was the blessing of Naphtali — had hitherto seemed such a portion for one who only deserved hell, that I was bewildered ! Was this blessed contentment with my lot a delusion ? Ought I to be weeping over past sins, and seeking for present ones, when God had put them all away by the

sacrifice of his sinless Son, and brought me *nigh* unto Himself? How then was I reconciled to God? He had called me to follow Him through good report and evil report, without any bargain as to what wages I should receive. Certainly, if I had counted on immunity from suffering I should have lost the blessing; for if the power of Christ rest upon us, it may be used both for testimony and service.

It is not long since that a Christian mother was watching for the arrival of her beloved son from a foreign land. All were in expectation, all in gladness. A telegram arrived; the vessel was in Southampton waters, in a few hours he would be in her arms.

The few hours passed. A rapid knock at the door brought the rejoicing family into the hall to receive—a stranger. The long-looked-for son had died before he could land.

That day of sorrow was seen only by Him who wept at Bethany, and the following day, when the mourning mother was asked to dictate the letter which should impart their sorrow to another, she meekly replied, "Write that my Saviour has been to me more precious than ten sons!" This was not nature. It was the heavenly power of sustaining grace. A testimony that has been accepted and blessed.

In a vision of the night I was taught a lesson of God's love to those who wait, and watch, and pray, and have no other visible service.

A busy harvest-field spread before me in the glow of noon. On one side was a green bank shaded by hazel and maple ; the shadows were deep and dark in contrast to the sunny plain, but dew lay heavy on the grass and flowers. My eye was directed to a blue speedwell ; and a clear, musical voice over it said, —

“ The little speedwell thinks it has no service in the harvest-field ; but see ! ” I beheld it suddenly covered with a transparent veil, such as is woven by the spiders, from spray to spray, in the early autumn morning. The fair blue flower was distinctly visible ; for minute drops of dew now fell on the veil, and studded the outline of its azure petals, and every bud, and leaf, and stem were more clearly seen than before.

“ Every blossom with its coronal of pearl turned heavenward,” said the unseen teacher, as if replying to my thought. “ She does serve ; she lifts her blue eyes to heaven, and drinks in the sunshine and the soft dews of heaven, and lives for heaven.”

Above the flower unrolled like a scroll an empty chair, an empty bed, a closed book, and a woman’s garments cast aside, all giving me a sense of desolation.

The voice said, “ A vacant place.”

I looked again upon the green bank : there lay the speedwell cut down ; the sunshine burst upon the coronal of dew ; the pearl-drops were no longer pearls, but each one sent forth a ray of glory. The fair blue flower was gathered, and the voice said,

"Her name is Veronica" (the botanical name for the speedwell).

Full of the thoughts of my sweet dream, I wrote it to a young stranger who had called on me just before she was laid aside from service that she loved, and the Holy Spirit used it to cheer and comfort her. Ten years have gone by, and find her still on the hedge-row of the harvest-field ; but the dew lies all night upon her branches, and soon the coronal of pearls will be changed for a crown of glory.

We are all differently constituted. We have all a place in the kingdom for which we are in a state of preparation ; and as the elements of the earthen vessel differ, so also does that spiritual discipline which is unseen ; and the amount of trial accorded to some can no more be accounted for than the various external positions in life in which it has pleased the Father of spirits to place his children.

It is well so ; for while occasionally we may sympathize with and cheer some fellow-pilgrim on the way home, and be ourselves soothed and instructed, God has placed each one in his own individual sphere before Him and with Him, so that we only find full comprehension from Him who Himself bare our infirmities and sicknesses ; and though many a time He "comforteth us by the coming of Titus," yet at other times He will show us that He is not restricted to instruments, and will reveal Himself either by unfolding his own Word, or by the Holy Spirit's action on the heart, which we cannot trace.

Beloved, these are some of the valleys of that land of promise which is your inheritance. "It drinketh water of the rain of heaven : a land which the Lord thy God careth for : the eyes of the Lord thy God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year." (Deut. xi. 11, 12.)

Lord ! I would work for thee
In thy wide field afar,
The joyful song wakes echoes sweet
Where thy dear servants are.
Vain seems my life for thee,
While I lie here apart;
O, give to me the hearing ear
And the understanding heart !

" My child ! yon busy scene
Is not assigned to thee ;
Thou hast a place upon the Rock,
There thou shalt rest with me.
The pine-tree loves the plain,
The cedar seeks the height,
Myrtles in the valley low
May bear their blossoms white.

" Safe from the scorching day
Its sheltered life hath been ;
The storms that swept above the hill
Have left my valleys green."
Lord, let me meekly learn
The mysteries of thy grace,
Content, if only I may share
The sunshine of thy face !

VII.

THE LAMP AND THE LIGHT.

"Thy word is true from the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth forever." — PSALM cxix. 160.

"For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." — ROM. xv. 4.

IT was mid-day at Venice, when, to escape the heat and glare of the Grand Canal, and to rest my weary gondolier, I entered Santa Maria dei Frari, a church abounding in marble and sculpture, but with less meretricious ornament than generally pervades churches in Italy.

The door was opened for me by a Carthusian monk, whose gentle, courteous manner contrasted with that of a bustling little priest, who immediately joined us. In reply to his question if I did not think this church the finest I had seen, I replied I had entered no other; but, fine as it was, it would soon pass away, while the living God would abide in his temple forever.

"This is the temple of God," said the priest, waving his hand.

"And the light by the altar?" I inquired.

"Is the presence of God."

"No," I ventured to say; 'the temple of God is

a broken, contrite heart. And the lamp is but the symbol the Israelites had before Christ came as the light ; it is a type from the Old Testament."

"Old Testament," he repeated, interrupting me. "We do not want the Old Testament; *we* have all we need in the New."

"Then where do you find there that the Virgin Mary is to be placed between the soul and the Saviour?"

"She died and rose again with her body, and went into paradise as Christ did," replied the priest, evasively.

"Will you show me where it is written?" I inquired, offering him my Testament.

"Not there," he said, putting it back, "but it is in the Breviary."

"But the Bible is the only inspired book ; and in the New Testament Christ says, 'I am the Door : by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved.' "

"That is true — you are right there," replied the Italian, complacently.

"You say, then, that Christ is the Door, but where does it affirm that the Virgin Mary is the key? "

"No, no ; Peter has the keys."

"Nay, Jesus Christ has the keys. He says, 'Behold, I am alive for evermore, and have the keys of hell and of death.' "

"But the Pope!" interrupted the priest, impetuously.

"There is nothing of a pope in the Bible."

"The Pope is the representative of Peter," continued he, authoritatively.

"We are warned not to add anything to or take anything away from the Holy Bible."

The priest turned abruptly from me to several people who had gathered round him, whom he addressed very volubly, so that I could not follow his discourse. However, I detected that he told them I was a Jew, and that he had refuted all my arguments against the Church.

As I could not explain myself to them, I went on my way, praying that the lamp for my feet and the light to my path might be increasingly precious to me, and that no man might bar us from the Word of God.

How often has the lighted lamp in that marble temple risen to my mind, when I have met with Protestants by whom a great part of the book of God was unvalued because unknown, and who use the words of the Italian priest, "We have all we need in the New Testament."

These are not days to neglect the Word of God, when his enemies assail it on every side, and Satan, as an angel of light, pretends to divide the true from the false, and give an understanding of its sacred pages through man's intellectual discernment or the power of familiar spirits.

The most subtle form of Antichrist in the present day is Spiritism, the more so that, like all Satan's

devices, it adapts itself to every condition of mind. Nay, should a man be seeking in the Word of God, the enemy will meet him, as he did the Saviour of old, by quoting partial truths without their context, and set the soul on “doing many things,” to draw it from the simplicity of faith in the mighty Sacrifice already consummated for sinners.

If Spiritism has convinced the Materialist of the spiritual world, it has done nothing in teaching him our utter vileness and lost condition. This the Holy Spirit alone can do. The devils believe and tremble ; and they would lure fallen man not to believe and not to tremble, though in peril, after death, of judgment and hell.

The pretended reverence of the spirits for the sacred writings and the things of God is but another device of the evil one to win souls from the only source of light and life. The visible conflict that has lately shaken the world¹ is but a faint picture of that which is waged in spiritual places with the heirs of salvation, and never was the whole armor of God more needed to be proved to stand against the wiles of the devil.

How can the value of the intact Word of God be sufficiently estimated ! Withdraw one precept ; blot out one promise ; cast only a suspicion on his revelation of Himself to man ; distrust the future state of reward and punishment, his present care, his unutterable mercy, his love — and what have we ?

¹ The Franco-Prussian War, 1870-71.

Through natural causes we may behold his goodness, we may have experience of the wonderful intervention of his providence ; but if we only relate it or receive it from others, how can we be sure that it is not imagination or delusion ? We may gaze on the works of Nature in their glowing beauty, and pronounce that “God is good ;” but grace alone can look from the cross to the glory, and declare that God is Love !

The lamp to our path is the light to our feet as every day’s need requires, revealing Him who is light for every circumstance, for every perplexity. That which has been shall be again. He who led Hagar in her desolation to the spring in the desert is the same God who gave the woman of Samaria living water. He who protected the infant Moses on the river bank will to-day watch over the helpless, and move the hearts of kings and queens to be nursing fathers and nursing mothers. He who has promised to lead the blind by a way he knows not is the same God who put into the heart and lips of Bartimeus, “Thou Son of David, have mercy on me !” He who drew the Queen of the East to hear the wisdom of Solomon is the same Lord who says to every one that believes, “Call upon me : I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things that thou knowest not.” He who led Eliezer in the way, and answered him according to the letter of his prayer, is the same powerful Friend who says to-day, “Whatsoever things ye ask I will give

you ; " and "No *good* thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly." Therefore, let us take possession of the riches of the Word, as a lamp to our feet, and follow the light falling everywhere on the rocky path, where the footprints of our Lord and Saviour mark the narrow way.

It is by the Word of God, received in faith and taken as the daily bread, that the sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit is communicated to the soul. Our promised portion is a land of brooks of water, and these are the channels to enrich and fertilize the soil. Without the Holy Spirit the Bible will be nothing more than any other history. The Holy Spirit that indited it must unfold it.

Perhaps the sovereignty of God is nowhere more clearly exhibited than in this (1 Cor. ii. 14), the impossibility of gaining anything from the Word without the teaching of his Spirit. Even if it revealed God's holiness and faithfulness, it would not reveal our vileness and our restoration. Neither can the most diligent merely intellectual study of it glorify Him. This is as if a man became highly educated in botany and medicine, and never used his knowledge for the amelioration of suffering ; or studied the root of a language which he never could speak.

How often do we "err, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God." We take some second-hand opinion or hold some erroneous notion, because we have not proved it experimentally.

The mind undwelt in by the Spirit becomes an easy prey to the enemy.

Some are caviling over a word, and disputing over a doctrine, while their own hearts are dry and barren. When the Israelites were bitten by the fiery serpents, they did not waste the precious moments in questioning as to the number that would be saved, nor of the manner of their coming or their healing. They looked at the uplifted serpent of brass because they believed. Looking to the object set before them proved their faith. They felt the sting ; they knew it betokened death : they looked, and lived.

To neglect the Word of God for anything else is to forsake our own mercies. How do I know what illustration of the Word will be found in the day's circumstances ? How can I divine what sealing of his faithfulness in his dealing with me ? Who can say what special precept was needed to be enforced by the very page I have neglected ?

To live without our daily food is to lose the unfolding of the Lord Himself ; for to know Him in whom we believe is the object of life and the end of redemption.

“Never give up reading the Bible,” said an old Christian to me, in the early days of my acquaintance with it. “If you do not feel inclined to it, read it all the same.” Neither should the sense of sin make us close it, nor wandering thoughts, nor the desire to leave it for something else. Read it

because it is a duty, if you cannot read it as a pleasure. Read it because God has promised his Holy Spirit to them that ask, and the Bible is given into your hand as a revelation of Him who gives it.

Oftentimes you will have to learn your own insufficiency. The light is withdrawn from the lamp ; there is no enjoyment ; it is a dry collection of facts and doctrines, in which we seem to have no lot or portion. It may be that at these seasons the Lord is proving us, if we will wait upon Him for that which He alone can bestow. Therefore, it is better to read on and pray for light, than leave off reading because we gather nothing. The instrument is one which the Lord has promised to bless. The power of the Spirit is for you ; for if you have not the Spirit of God, how shall you learn your adoption ? and it has been given you, that by that anointing you may understand all things. (1 John ii. 20.)

Satan hates the Bible, and if he can inject evil thoughts into the mind inclined to it he will. Satan is a conquered foe, but who shall gainsay that he is a subtle one ?

When days of fiery trial come — and come they will to all — when a half-superstitious dread of neglecting the Word of God as a means of grace alone induces you to read an allotted portion, take your stand on the promises, “ Ask, and it shall be given ; seek, and ye shall find ; knock, and it shall be opened unto you ; ” and “ though the vision tarry,

wait for it." God is faithful. The rivulet in the valley is dry, but has the spring failed? O no! the clouds are full of rain, and will empty themselves on the parched earth. The snow is on the mountain-tops, but it will melt beneath the sunbeams. Our ears are no longer gladdened by the voice of many waters; the bed of the torrent is dry. The prayer of faith brought abundance of rain from a little cloud. Elijah's God is your God. The Word and the testimony go hand-in-hand. The Word of God is precious to me, not only as declaring his love to fallen man, but especially as revealing his love to me individually. The neglect of meditating on the letter of his love and his covenant is always the loss of blessing. When, through haste or temptation, I have missed my daily food, my loss is immeasurably great. On the other hand, when I have been unavoidably prevented, the Holy Spirit has brought to my mind portions of the Word which have been suitable to the necessity, and led me to cry, "My meditation of Him shall be sweet."

There is a continual work of the Spirit in the soul, even though it seem listless, and much that it is impossible to trace. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." (John iii. 8.) Much will be seen to be an unconscious application of the Word of God which has been from time to time our meditation.

We shall find ourselves learning from the people of God in his first dispensation, by their falls, and their faith, and their blessings, of the fullness of God revealed in Jesus ; of the position of the disciples before and after Pentecost. Prophet and patriarch, old man and little Samuel ; the raven, the brook, and the ass that reproved the prophet, and the dove upon the wild waste of waters,— all, by the Holy Spirit, will become messengers from Him to them that wait on Him. Therefore, if the way is lonely and shadows darken around you, and you have fled into the wilderness, you are not too far for the God of Elijah. “ Arise, and eat ; for the journey is too great for thee.” Wait, trust ; for “ bread shall be given you ; your water shall be sure.” Take the word of God, which is the sword of the Spirit ; for He is faithful that calleth you, and not one of his promises shall fail, neither shall his Word return unto Him void.

A lady, in speaking of her conversion, said that she was formerly a skeptic. She visited in the neighborhood where a preacher, a man much blessed to others, had once been a thorough unbeliever, like herself. So she went to hear him. He preached that day on the value of the Word of God with prayer, to those who sincerely desire to know the truth. He told them, that in the time of his infidelity he was one day resting on a seat in Hyde Park, and fell into conversation with an elderly gentleman, who, after some discussion with him on

the inability of his intellectual powers to give him an estimate of divine things, advised him to go home, read the third of St. John's Gospel, and pray to be enlightened on it. He did not believe in prayer, so he did not pray ; but, according to appointment, he met the old man again, who offered no more argument, but gave him the same advice. Struck by this persistent simplicity, he went home and read the third chapter of John, and prayed. That prayer was answered, and he was "born again."

The lady listened in deep interest to this testimony, given by a man who had been in the same position as she knew herself to be. She believed him ; and thought if *he* was thus helped, that truth might be revealed to her in the same manner. She returned home ; she read the third chapter of John's Gospel and prayed over it, and received the answer forthwith. "I am but slow in learning," she said ; "for I am finding out that we must *live* as well as *believe*."

THE TWO FOUNTAINS.

O, tarry not, and look not thou behind thee ;
Sleeper, arise ;
The past in iron fetters will but bind thee,
And cloud thine eyes :
For the world proffers but the fleeting dreams
Thou know'st too well,
False with the serpent's wiles whose beauty gleams
With light from hell.

Closed is the gate, and seraphs watch the garden
Whence sprang our woes,
And o'er the threshold, past the angel warden,
A fountain flows,—
A stream of bitter water, ceasing never
Through these long years,
Still wandering onward to dark Jordan's river,
The fount of tears.

There is another fountain softly flowing,—
It springs above ;
Hope, life, and peace, and joy, that spring bestowing
From God's deep love.
Open, for the smitten Rock is pouring
The living wave,
Healing the broken heart, and oft restoring
The life it gave.

It was for *thee* the Holy One was smitten,—
For *thy* great need ;
It was for *thee* the Word of Life was written :
Then rise and read ;
And in the light the wondrous page unfolding,
Like one of old,
Thou wilt exclaim, our King's rich store beholding,
“Not half was told.”

VIII.

WROUGHT STONES.

"Joseph called the name of the first-born Manasseh; for God, said he, hath made me *forget all my toil*, and all my father's house. And the name of the second called he Ephraim; for *God hath caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction*." — GEN. xli. 51, 52.

"Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father's house." — PSALM xlv. 10.

WHEN we look upon the blessing wherewith the Lord has blessed us, and the service which He has made fruitful in the land of our affliction, we forget all our toil and nature's sorrows, and, like Joseph, in our progress, name our God-given treasures as landmarks of our way. Joseph had the mind of the Lord when he placed Ephraim before Manasseh; for it is in rejoicing in the rich inheritance He has prepared for us, that we forget our own people and our father's house. But only when God shall give to every man according as his work shall be, and not according to what it appears to others or to himself, shall we be able to trace the love that has guided us, and the wisdom that has hidden the progress of grace in our own hearts and in the souls of others.

The two prominent desires of the new man are growth in grace, and the gift of offspring. Child-

ren were one among the blessings to God's servants in the old dispensation ; and to be barren was a reproach, as though God had no favor unto such. Yet God was entreated for Rebekah, Rachel, and others. Barrenness, in its spiritual sense, may well take us to the Lord. "What wilt thou give me, seeing that I go childless ?" was the cry of Abraham. And will the Lord not be entreated of us, and give us the joy of bringing to Him children who shall witness for Him in this world, and who shall hereafter swell the glad song of praise through eternal ages to the glory of the Lamb slain ?

"To every purpose there is time and judgment." (Eccles. viii. 6.) Many souls are born and develop more rapidly than others ; some, early enlightened, tread the way without any great combat or doubt ; while soldiers of Christ, called into the van of the battle, marvel why they have not the same unruffled repose as their brethren, not recognizing the cause in their position of conflict and testimony.

It requires no lengthened observation to be aware that we are in a state of preparation for higher service. Each soul begotten in Christ Jesus is led on and instructed according to its diverse gift and future ministry, and has a separate position. The simplest faith has the fullest enjoyment, and the most faithful servant is the happiest son. The olive-tree bears its treasures of oil, notwithstanding the summer drought, and though fierce winds sweep over its flexible branches. The myrtle in the val-

ley, seen or unseen, puts forth its snowy blossoms, and breathes its fragrance, though none may delight in it but Him who says, “I will plant in the wilderness the cedar, the shittah-tree, and the myrtle, and the oil-tree ; I will set in the desert the fir-tree, and the pine and the box-tree together : that they may see, and know, and consider, and understand *together*, that the hand of the Lord hath done this, and the Holy One of Israel hath created it.” (Isaiah xli. 19, 20.) How the husbandman may have transplanted the tree we cannot see ; how the circumstances of our earthly lives were needful for our after spiritual development we know here only “in part.” It is not for us to seek too curiously into this. “Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,” let us press on. If the Lord has called us, there must be no returning to our nets and fishing ; no needless regrets over the circumstances of our natural life, if we would follow Jesus. Some are longer in forgetting than others, but it is from the lack of taking possession of the land that lies before us.

The evidence of the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost was in the grace and gifts which fitted the recipients to be instantaneous witnesses for the ascended Saviour to the uttermost parts of the earth. This was the sealing of the promise on the waiting band. Some had left their nets ; some their father and their ship ; some, like Matthew,

their money-changing, but all had something to leave for Jesus. The Lord had already breathed upon his disciples, and said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." (John xx. 22.) He had expounded to them the Scriptures concerning Himself, and again "He opened their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures." (Luke xxiv. 27, 45.) This was evidently the preparation for their reception of Him in his risen life.

"Ye know Him ; for He dwelleth *with* you, and shall be *in* you." "When He, the Spirit of Truth, is come, He will guide you into *all* truth." "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." (John xvi.) Yet the Lord had said that He had manifested the Father to them, that they were beloved of Him ; that they believed in Him, and that they knew that the Son proceeded from the Father, and that the Father had sent Him. (John xvii. 6-8.) And yet there were greater blessings in store.

The Spirit of Promise, like the dew and sunshine of this lower earth, must diffuse its soft but powerful influence over the slumbering germ ere it could manifest life in itself. The disciples had forty days to realize the resurrection ; and now the ascension of their risen Lord to the place of power left them only to wait for the promise of the Father. The clouds hid Him they loved from their sight, and He was received up into heaven, when the confirmation of his faithfulness came in the fulfillment of

the promise that He had repeatedly given them, “Your sorrow shall be turned into joy.”

They returned to Jerusalem with the heavenly message in their hearts, that “this *same* Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven.” (Acts i. 2.) No, He had not left them “comfortless.”

That there was a peculiar reception of spiritual power as well as the special gifts, there can be no doubt. We find among the waiting people, “the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brethren;” but all were not equally prominent. Every step of the disciples of Him who promised marks his faithfulness and seals his truth. He had declared that wonders should be worked in his name, by this same power. “He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also, and greater works than these shall ye do, *because* I go to the Father.” (*We* have this same Jesus!) While witnessing for Him there is an evident enlarging of the vessel, a development of spiritual understanding, which leads on from faith to faith: it is unrecognized by the multitude, and unseen by all but by Him who searcheth the heart. As much as there is a diversity of gifts to the members of Christ, so will there be a diversity of trial, circumstance, and service.

How frequently the chisel and the hammer are used in silence and darkness. Thousands of cares

and joys go to make up the sum of your life, lines upon lines, the experimental knowledge of God manifested in Jesus. What appears to the natural eye a sudden conversion or an unexpected result is often the birth which has been long silently preparing. The Lord hears the sighs of his people, and numbers their tears — the tears of rapture — that thoughts of his love call forth ; tears of gratitude as they recount his grace ; tears of praise as they dwell on his glory ; tears of contrition shed over the faithlessness and sin that wounded his loving heart. The same Lord who takes heed of the fall of a sparrow, and numbers the hairs of our heads, will He not count our least desire to carry life and light to the blind soul ?

How many grains of sand, how many stones, form the structure which we have not seen in detail ? How long the foundation was in delving we know not, what time before the mass of masonry and rough-hewn timber were fitted into their allotted place, and from the unsightly preparation arose a temple of symmetrical proportion and beauty. So it is now in God's husbandry ; so will it be hereafter in spiritual surprises. We are not always content to be used of the Lord in the way He sees best. We hesitate to carry the sand for the mortar ; it seems such an inferior service, we think it useless. We can only believe when the top-stone is placed on with shouting.

One hopelessly complains, "I gave a tract, but I

do not think it was of any use ; and I spoke a few words, but I do not believe I made any impression." Why not? Because you did not see it? Ah! let us learn by experience. We do not proclaim the effect of many an unseen influence to the multitude, nor do we always whisper it to the heart that loves us best ; but there it is.

There are few who have not something they wish to forget ; it may be a recollection of childhood, a folly of youth, a record of riper years that a glance or tone fixed on the memory. We seek to fly from it, but it pursues us. We think we have overcome it, but it rises again, and only in the power of Him mighty to save can we escape its pursuit. Shall the work of Satan stand with its baleful influence, and shall the Lord, who came to destroy the works of the devil, be unable to carry the minutest influence for the blessing of the soul He designs to deliver?

Call not anything vain in the precious work of God's husbandry that has been attempted in his name. He does not lightly esteem the effort to bless the soul that to our eyes is regardless or disdainful of our good will. Fear not, follow the tiny seed with faith and prayer, for the Spirit bloweth where it listeth, and in a day you know not there may rise a temple which your feeble hand assisted to raise, though you know not how and when. (Ecclesiastes xi. 5.)

These thoughts sprang from meeting one from among the wandering tribe of Bohemians that

specially call forth my sympathy, from the difficulty (hitherto) of access to them. When I spoke to this converted fortune-teller, now a temple of grace, a dwelling for the Spirit of God (1 Cor. iii. 16), I thought how many hands had been used to carry the materials, though the Hand of Love alone had raised the structure.

As the light fell upon her upturned face she gave me more the idea of one of the women of the Bible than any I had then looked upon ; the peculiar features of her race were there, but softened by that expression of calm and happy trust in the faithfulness of God, which proclaimed her conscious security in the rest she had found. Her clear olive complexion, her bright black eyes and raven hair, gave evidence of her natural birth and parentage.

“How long is it since the Lord called you ?” I said, as she paused in the recital of some passages of her life’s history.

“Above twenty years,” she replied.

“I thought it had been more recent.”

“Since I believed my sins pardoned ; yes, since I knew my precious Saviour as mine — not two years !”

“Then, with me you can praise a long-suffering Saviour.”

The uplifted eyes, in grateful thanksgiving, was her only answer ; and then, after a pause, she said sadly, “My sins are so great I cannot bear to look back upon them.”

“ Why should you? for He says, ‘ Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow ; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.’ ” (Isaiah i. 18.) .

“ Yes! but there are days when they will rise, and I cannot forget them.”

“ It may be that we are thus to prove the power of the Lamb slain, and go forth as conquerors again through Him who loved us ; but how dealt the Lord with you ?”

“ There had been long a whisper in my heart that my calling was an evil one. Many a time when the silver has been given me I have wiped my hands on my apron, as if that could cleanse me. None knew how I hated the thing that I did. Yet I did it ! Often in our merry feastings with my companions I groaned forth, ‘ What a sinful calling is ours ! ’ but I comforted myself with the thought that my husband and children depended on me for support. I said, ‘ I cannot give it up.’

“ I had a friend in our tribe whom I loved as a sister ; her name was Mignonette. I went to a preaching near our encampment. When I returned I repeated what I had heard, more for the sake of merriment than anything else ; but it was the truth of God I spoke, and it fell into the heart I least expected would receive it. Mignonette was converted, and soon after she left us. I hated the Name that had robbed me of my friend.

“ My youngest boy I loved the best of all, but he

took the fever and died, and I knew it was God contending with me, and my heart was full of trouble ; but I went on in my trade. There came like a promise in my conscience, that if I would give up my sin I should find a blessing ; but I still followed it, while I longed after salvation. Then another child was born. She was the loveliest flower that ever bloomed. I called her Mignonette, in remembrance of the friend I had lost ; perhaps I loved her better for the name she bore, and I thought it would comfort me. God took her, and I *knew* He took her, for He was contending with me still.”

“ Did that lead you to the feet of the Lord ? ”

“ It would be hard to say what it was, but I now see that all things worked together through those twenty years, and I know his love and mercy now.

“ Sometimes a preacher by our encampment seemed to preach only to me, though he could not see me in my hiding-place where I listened ; sometimes a lady in passing said a few kind words to me about my sinful life, and gave me a tract. Another would repeat a text to me, and so the work went slowly, slowly on. I did give up my evil trade, and that day I found the only remedy for sin — my Saviour.”

May it strengthen your heart whose eyes rest upon her simple story, and encourage you to believe in the acceptance of the least service you can do for Him ; who never rejected a prayer that was ever so

faint, or a service that was ever so feeble. You have asked God to make you fruitful, and He is the answerer of prayer ; it is not for you to decide as to your influence. It is not in the sword that the power dwells, but in the hand that wields it. It was not by David's might that he slew the lion and the bear, nor that the giant of Gath fell beneath the pebble from the brook ; it was by the power of the Spirit of God.

RETURNING.

“Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest.”—MARK x. 21.

Once I said : O Master, tell me
How thy kingdom to attain ;
What shall fit me for thy presence ?
How thy favor may I gain ?

“Come,” He said, “thy rich possessions
Leave, and thou shall fitted be
For the kingdom of my Father ;
Take thy cross and follow me.”

Then I turned me full of sorrow,
Counting up life’s precious store ;
For I knew not all the idols
Cherished in my heart before.

But the Saviour looked upon me,
And He loved me—O, how well !
Love awoke new life within me,
Light upon my spirit fell.

Then how poor were my possessions,
And my treasures mean and dim ;
Jesus Christ had smiled upon me —
I have turned and followed Him.

O my Lord ! thy smile was favor,
Though on my cold heart it shone ;
And thy love is Life Eternal :
So my wandering heart was won.

IX.

DESERT PLACES.

"He withdrew Himself into the wilderness, and prayed." — LUKE v. 16.

"The Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands." The new heart is his abode, and there the Holy Spirit testifies his presence, felt, if not acknowledged, even by those who despise his power. However contracted the sphere, however antagonistic surrounding circumstances may be, let none despair of testimony, and therefore of service. The land cannot be barren through which the river of life is flowing. Can a soul be unfruitful if it realizes fellowship with Jesus? Thus in the solitary place the stranger may look confidently to the heavenly Boaz to perform the kinsman's part. We all know that in order to experience the weight of loneliness it is not needful to be alone; the caverns of the heart God only can fill. Thorns hedge up the busiest path, and even in the home circle there may be an isolation of the spirit, perhaps more complete than in a desert solitude.

Such seasons are offers of special blessings, when the Beloved cries, "Open to me!" He waits to come with new and living power to the soul, in the tender relationship of friendship. "O my dove,

that art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs, let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice ; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely."

Surely none can sympathize with his solitary followers so well as He who has gone before them. Remember his divine capacity, and his lowly station on earth ; his pure mind that endured the contradiction of sinners, and his holy life that called forth the scorn and hatred of men. But He went into the wilderness, and there "prayed." He is in the wilderness still, and He has allured his loved ones thither, that they may hear his voice, and learn more of his loving heart than they have yet done in the busy activities of life.

But there are those who tread this solitary path, too faintly realizing the love and favor of God. To them the wilderness is a place of conflict. But ah ! with whom is that conflict ? Not with God, but with the powers of darkness — "with wicked spirits in heavenly places."

Soldiers of the cross ; followers of the Lamb ! be of good comfort ; the Captain of our salvation will meet his wounded soldiery here. Does He command heavy chains for the feeble hands that can scarcely plead for the dumb lips ? Does the Lord upbraid the weary one ? Does He cast the sinking soul from his sight ? Nay ! He stoops to wash the dust-stained feet ; He cleanses the gaping wounds, pours in the oil of his love, and lays the drooping

head upon his breast. “In all their affliction He is afflicted.”

Be of good courage, ye who meet the enemy’s malice in many a fierce encounter in the desert places. Jesus is the adversary of your enemy. Confide in Him : “Cast not away, therefore, your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward.” As you live with Him, you shall live for Him ; for “light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart.”

I knew a man of God who earned his bread by the sweat of his brow. It was impossible to observe him and not feel that he was separated from those around him by the indwelling of the Holy Ghost. He told me in deep humility that he could not “speak for the Lord,” by which I discovered that he meant that he could not accost strangers on the subject of their personal salvation. If he could not speak to man, he could to God ; and never shall I forget the first time I heard his voice raised in supplication and prayer at the little way-side gathering. I knew not from whom it proceeded, but I felt that whatever it was, that soul had power with God.

He went to live in a village where none cared for anything beyond this present life ; he was a stranger indeed among them. Early and late he labored in the fields. But the Lord of the whole earth had ordained a blessing for this dark hamlet when He sent his servant there, and a river of the

water of life was to flow through this lonely man, unseen by all save the One who keepeth Israel, and who neither slumbers nor sleeps.

Yet for this ministry the servant of God was not required to forsake his calling, but to follow the Lord in it. He lived in a poor thatched cottage on the outskirts of the village ; and when his work was done, seated by the low casement of his room in summer time, he rested his weary heart in close communion with his heavenly Friend. Dispirited by intercourse with the mocker and profane, he refreshed himself with new contemplations of the covenant of grace, or pondered over the promises which he was every day proving for himself to be priceless treasures and constant sources of spiritual power.

As he communed with God aloud, and poured forth his soul in prayer, a woman of ill character passed by the cottage door ; the sound of the stranger's voice arrested her steps, and she lingered by the casement. She listened. Never before had she heard a soul speaking to the God of its life in such glad thanksgiving for redemption through the blood of the Crucified, or imagined such holy boldness in approaching the Holy One, by her unsought. It seemed a new language to her ears. The prayer ceased. The listener, astonished and perplexed, went on her way, and the solitary man, the charge of angels, lay down to sleep. None but God saw that tiny rill of life that followed a sinner's steps,

whispering, “Come!” “And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come; and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.” (Rev. xxii. 17.)

Another day passed. The woman again took up her station in the twilight to listen, and the freedom from condemnation in which the stranger rejoiced seemed to bind her in chains of misery unfelt before. Her occupation was a degrading one. She possessed a voice of remarkable power and sweetness ; her husband frequented the taverns in the neighborhood, and she accompanied him ; for with the price of his wife’s company and songs he procured from the landlord or his guests the liquor that he thirsted for.

Day by day the singer marked the man of God, to see if his life contradicted his desires after holiness, for his prayers set a sign upon him ; she watched for his halting week after week, but watched in vain. While in many a conflict, and in humble brokenness of spirit, this dweller in the desert seemed to himself a cumberer of the ground, as far as bringing any honor to God was concerned, yet through him flowed the living stream which should turn “the wilderness into a standing water, and dry ground into water-springs.”

God’s minister slept, unconscious of his ministry, little dreaming that the prayers he had breathed in the silence of that summer evening were disturbing the midnight orgies of sinners to whom he had never

spoken, and who had never heard of his existence. The woman's heart was heavy, and she could not sing. She turned away in bitterness of spirit from the scene in which she had hitherto dwelt contentedly. The anger of her husband raged against her ; his gains were gone, and the means of procuring his evening's unholy revelry were over. His persecution added to the poor creature's distress, but it was as nothing in comparison to the weight of misery in her heart. Heavier and heavier pressed the burden of her sins ; the way of escape she knew not ; despair took possession of her soul. Satan now thought the prey was his own ; he whispered that in death there was no remembrance ; but the enemy added not, "and after death the judgment."

The heart-stricken woman saw only one way of escape from her wretched life and the memory of her sins, and she determined to rid herself of an existence which had become intolerable to her. One morning, when she thought herself secure from interruption, she went to a neighboring stable, and tying a noose in a rope, fastened it securely to a beam in the roof, and prepared to end a life too miserable to be borne. But, as her foot was on the edge of the loft from which she premeditated casting herself down, the stranger's praise and thanksgiving for redemption through the precious blood of Jesus came flowing into her mind, and arrested her. She knelt ; she repeated again and again the words of the prayer which had taken her captive ; such

sweetness came with the words, “Redeemed ! pardoned through the precious blood of God’s dear Son !” As if the floodgates of her tears had opened the way for prayer, it poured forth in a wondrous tide. The sinner wept at the feet of Jesus ! The prey was taken from the mighty. Hour after hour went by, she heeded it not ; and daylight had faded into evening before her new-born joy allowed her to perceive that the day was spent, and she was saved.

When the servant of the Lord returned to his dwelling, it was to find a rejoicing child of the faith awaiting him, the fruit of those days that seemed of no account, save that he walked in fellowship with Jesus. He had lived near the fountain ; the stream that flowed in refreshment through his own soul had given life to the weary one without. (John iv. 14.)

Year after year, from many a prayer-meeting, arose the voice of the rescued minstrel, clear and strong, in strains of praise to the Lord and Giver of life. And not alone. Her husband was by her side, the first to give heed to her words, and to believe her witness to the Lord’s long-suffering mercy towards herself. Heaven alone can declare the harvest of that lonely man who walked with God.

Have you not shrunk from desert places, whether in the city’s solitude or elsewhere, and yet found that the Lord there revealed Himself in a manner that no other circumstance could have afforded ?

Has He not there proved better and dearer to you than ten friends, and has not the wilderness rung with songs of heaven? There you have had some new communication with the Lord you loved; and, like Jacob in his desert solitude, exclaimed, "This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven."

I have had some experience of desert places in my wanderings; they have ever been productive of richest blessings. When, by the grace of God, I have been able to look to Jesus, and to Jesus only, He has made the wilderness and the solitary place glad for me, and caused the desert to rejoice and blossom as the rose.

Subjection is a needful requirement to meet the mysterious dealings of the Lord. The *will* must be offered up, not only as to place, but as to manner of service; and this is often the Isaac last laid upon the altar.

Rocks intervene which hide the Shepherd from the sheep, but never the sheep from the Shepherd. His wisdom apportions what shall be fitting for growth and health. The footsteps of the flock are traced often on the ridges of the mountain path; the herbage is scanty there, and they are often bleating for Him who is not far off.

I narrate the following incident, trusting to the Lord to bless it to some member, as feeble as myself, who may be cast in desert places.

I was in a position of peculiar discomfort, sur-

rounded by careless worldlings, without any Christian companionship. Physically I was unfitted for any outward service, and I missed the quietude needful for calm meditation. For days together I could not write or read, and often it was an effort to think or pray.

My beloved Lord had so unmistakably placed me in this position, that I could confidently rely upon his purpose being fulfilled ; though what that purpose was, excepting the discipline of an often impatient will, I knew not.

Waiting hours are seed-times of blessing. But it is often the fourth watch of the night ere we say, “It is good to wait on thee.” “I waited patiently for the Lord,” is the key-tone of a song of praise. When I say that my Lord was present with me, I do not mean that I was in a state of joyous emotion, but I realized his promises, and knew that He was near me.

If we watch in times of tribulation, and limit not the Holy One of Israel, the desert will be to his children what it was of old, a wondrous arena on which his almighty power is displayed. Darkness of circumstances is quite a different phase of trial from darkness of conscience. Though painful to the flesh, the soul has a secret pleasure in watching the Lord’s way in the mighty waters, even when his footsteps are not seen ; and remembering his faithfulness, it exults, saying, “The Lord God shall help me, *therefore*, I shall not be confounded.”

"The darkness hideth not from thee ; but the night shineth as the day. The darkness and the light are both alike to thee." "Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light ? Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God." (Isaiah 1. 10.)

One day, while I was sitting by the window close upon the street, an earnest-looking man passed with a Bible under his arm. I watched him, feeling sure that he was on some service for my beloved Master. I said, "I cannot read *my* Bible : Lord, help me to pray for one who can." I had at once the most blessed realization of the acceptance of my prayer following a servant of the Lord (for this I felt he was), and leaving a blessing with him.

A week had gone by, and a steamer was preparing to sail. She was being loosed from her moorings, when I saw the same thoughtful-looking man with his Bible evidently hastening to the vessel. I prayed the Lord to detain it until he could reach it ; and I had the satisfaction of seeing the stranger take his place, as the steamer left the quay.

I then remembered that it was on this day of the preceding week that I had begun to pray for him. Then I said in my heart, "Who knows but the Lord has placed me here to pray for one who needs special help at this season ? I will accept it as a service ;" and I gave myself to prayer.

Speaking naturally I had not the least prospect on earth of hearing of any result. Seven weeks passed by ; I was expecting to close a sojourn which, though one of much trial, had been brightened for seven weeks by the consciousness of a secret service known only to God. He " divideth to every man severally as He will." I looked only to the day when hidden things should be revealed, to know how my prayer had been blessed.

The Lord had ordered it otherwise. He is a gracious Master to those who work but one hour in his vineyard. I discovered for whom I had been held in prayer ; and, previously to my departure, the Lord so ordered circumstances that I was obliged to apply to the stranger on a matter which required his immediate reply.

This necessitated my writing to him. I longed to know something of him ; but I kept the matter in my heart, and confined myself wholly to the business I had in hand. But when my letter was written, I felt the Lord did not smile on it ; so I thought again, and prayed, and rewrote it, but did not wait ; and then, sad-hearted and discouraged, I said, " Perhaps, after all, I am not to write."

Greatly to my discomfort, it seemed brought before me, that I must have a personal interview with the stranger. This was the only hard part of my service ; but the Lord gave me sweet assurance of his presence being with me, and a few hours

afterwards I found myself face to face with the subject of my seven weeks' prayers.

The purpose of my visit was soon satisfactorily arranged, and my heart was refreshed by the interview ; but on taking leave of him, I told him that, having no service here, I had longed for something I could do, and from my seeing him pass on certain days with his Bible, the Lord had given me to pray for him. The expression of his face told me that my service was no delusion.

"Tell me how long you have prayed," he inquired eagerly. "When was it that you first began?"

"Seven weeks ago," I answered ; "on the fourteenth of the month."

There was silence that I could not break. I felt his Master and my Master was praised and glorified in it. At last he said, "For seven weeks I have been helped and upheld beyond all I can tell you."

He then detailed to me the circumstances in which he had been placed, and whither he was bound the first day I had seen him pass me with his Bible.

Deep was the joy of that hour ; sweet was the lesson to my heart. My heavenly Master had appointed the service, and He would have me reap the fruit even here. Not man's judgment of what the Lord requires from his weak ones, but God's own requirement, constitutes our true service.

It was from this simple incident that I first

learned to look up to Him for direction in other equally trying positions. God is faithful, and will let none of his words fall to the ground. Gracious Lord! Thou hast said it,—“Walk before me.”

If the Lord sends trial to his children, He goes with it; and if He gives faith, He tests it. While we strive to be rid of the cross it will bruise us; but if we take it up and bear it, looking unto Jesus, it will become a fruit-bearing tree. Mere emotional feeling, in which the old nature bears part oftener than we are conscious of, is not always joy in the Lord, but joy in some of his gifts; and therefore is it that trial and tribulation have many lasting benefits that outwardly prosperous days fail in securing.

In fair weather, as his vessel glides over the water, the traveller gazes upon the coasts, bright in the sunshine, spread on either side of him. Occasionally, perhaps, he admires the wisdom of the Pilot. But when mists hide all the beauty from view, and storms beat upon the vessel, the voyage is not so pleasant. It calls for fuller faith in Him who guides. There is the same unerring wisdom; but before the tempest the traveller enjoyed the way and forgot the Guide, and now, with his eyes bent only on the Pilot, he forgets the way.

Early in the spring of the year, I came to England for some affairs that required my presence. I went to London, intending to remain a fortnight,

which would complete the matter for which I had been summoned, and then to proceed into the country.

A few days after my arrival, however, I was seized with severe illness. The spring passed, and the summer came, and I still lay incapable of moving, longing to quit the close air, but unable to obtain any change whatever ; for the Providence of God had so hedged up my path that I could not pass.

On the last day of August the heat was greater than had been known for years. The walls of the opposite houses and the white pavement reflected the rays of the sun, and the glare added to the discomfort produced by the sultry atmosphere. My couch was in a small apartment on the ground-floor, looking on the street, and the peculiar stillness which reigned was vocal to me of what was not, save in memory.

Long days and nights of suffering left me incapable of occupation, and the leaden pressure of the heated air weighed down every thought which strove to rise above the body's ills. A longing for that which was denied me came to disturb yet more that time of inaction. I craved for the fresh pure air of the country. There was nothing sinful in desiring the fresh air, you will say. There *is* sin in a rebellious desire for what is denied (Prov. xxiv. 9), a lack of subjection, a lack of love. The cross was

galling, and I wanted it changed before it had borne fruit.

I closed my eyes: visions of green woodlands and mountain paths rose before me, and last of all the childish memory of a river, with every bend of which I was familiar. Its banks were fringed with flowery sedges, and on its bosom blossomed the white water-lilies; the very ripple of the water for a moment seemed conjured back by my fevered imagination.

O gracious, loving God! Thou didst not leave me there, dwelling on things of time and sense. Neither didst thou visit my foolishness by giving me the desire of my discontented heart, by permitting me to choose my own path, by granting me fields and summer flowers, and sending leanness into my soul.

A brother or sister might upbraid me; but let me fall into the hands of the Lord, for He is pitiful and of tender mercy,—He remembered I was dust. My brain throbbed; I tried vainly to rest my longing vision elsewhere, and turned heavily on my pillow. Through the open window, round the corner of the street came distinctly to my ear a low monotonous cry. It was from an old man who sold wreaths of *immortelles*, some stained and painted to imitate other flowers, some in their own natural beauty of white or gold color; clusters for ornamenting the houses of the living, and chaplets for adorning the low chambers of the dead. Clearly

his voice rang through the still street, “ Everlasting flowers ! Ever — lasting flowers ! ”

I raised my head and listened, for to my sad heart the words sounded as though from heaven, reminding me that this was not my rest. There was no mistake. The words came again, distinct and clear, “ Ever — lasting flowers ! Everlasting flowers ! ” and then the voice ceased, and I heard it no more.

The man had unconsciously delivered his heavenly message. The fountain of my tears was unsealed ; the scales fell from my mental vision : like the blind men by the way-side, I received sight. “ Jesus had compassion on them, and touched their eyes ; and immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed Him.” (Matt. xx. 34.) I recognized in this long-protracted suffering, this strange captivity, this city dwelling, this sultry, silent, oppressive hour, my Father’s will, my Father’s love. I bowed my neck again to his gentle yoke, and never since that day has the snare of green woodlands, and rivers, and summer flowers, held dominion over me. For I know that Jehovah-Jesus has something better for his loved ones. It is the new man in Christ Jesus that shall inhabit the glorious land ; he has no part or portion in the earth which was cursed for man’s sake, although it may be fair to the senses. I looked for a city whose Builder and Maker is God ; I longed for fadeless joys, for ever — lasting flowers !

I was content to see the summer fade into autumn, and autumn give place to winter, and I said, He leadeth me in paths that I have not known ; but He can open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys. It is the same Lord who called me out of Egypt, and He will not forsake me. I shall some day see why it is thus with me. Let the Lord do that which is good in his sight.

Soon after this an aged relative of the mistress of the house returned from the country. When I saw her, she asked my prayers in behalf of a motherless girl in whom she had been much interested : first, for her soul's salvation ; secondly, that she might be brought to the house in the capacity of servant. I declined using my influence to induce this ; but I did join her in prayer, that if the Lord saw good He would bring it about in his own way. Perhaps I had less interest in the second part of the request, as I daily looked forward to the possibility of removal.

The Lord saw fit to keep me still a prisoner ; but the loving bonds no longer galled the flesh. I was seeking Him in it all. The Hand pierced for me had closed the door and barred the gate ; and I felt sure that when the time was accomplished, light would shine into my prison, and I should go forth understanding what the will of the Lord was.

Time rolled on, and many a song of praise arose from the rough waters on which it was the will

of my Lord that I should be borne. The young servant was engaged. I was not interested in her in any other way than by natural love and pity for the orphan, a plea which few can resist.

December came—the last week, and the close of the year found me where I was in its first quarter. The busy Christmas time was nigh, when the world, who celebrated the Lord's coming *in* the flesh as *of* the flesh, are occupied in planning enjoyment of the things of this world's good, in which the Lord Jesus could bear no part. (Rom. viii. 8.)

One day our little servant arrived from the country. She was obedient and trustworthy in her service ; yet it was but fruit of the old nature ; the love of Jesus, as the spring of life, was not there : so I yearned for her salvation.

As I sat alone in the wintry twilight, I looked back by the way my Lord had led me, when, bound in the sins and follies of the world, I looked forward to the joy of giving and receiving new-year's gifts, which had no aim but self-gratification ; the anticipated delight in the receiver, and the preparation, making up part of the satisfaction ; and I said, "Lord, give *me* a new-year's gift. Give *Thou*!" My thoughts ran over the spiritual gifts I needed, but did not pause there. "Give me a soul, Lord ; give me Harriet's *soul* for my new-year's gift." I craved for everlasting flowers for my Saviour's crown.

I have said, that in this labor of love the prepara-

tion of such a gift is foretasted joy, and the preparation of the heart is from the Lord. My preparation consisted of increased suffering, which confined me to my chamber, and left me more powerless than before for thought or action.

To the soul resting on Jesus there is always peace in believing ; but those who have to learn the fellowship of suffering understand something more of conformity to his death. The fruit of the Spirit is brought forth according to its season ; and if the call is for meekness, patience, and long-suffering, it may be borne with love, from which parent-root it springs : but he has not asked for joy ; grieve not that you cannot give. Suffer his will ; in this there is rich compensation ; for those that wait on Him shall not be ashamed. (Rev. ii. 3 ; Matt. xii. 50.)

I say this, because I would not have it supposed that it was a joyous season with me : far from it. I went forth weeping, bearing the precious seed. Weeping did not hinder the harvest ! It was not in my feeble hand bearing it ; it was in the power of the Holy Ghost in the seed of life cast forth.

Days passed. At last only two remained of this year of peculiar exercise and trial. Only two ! and my prayer was still unanswered.

Satan came in like a flood, and never did a more wily assault of the Evil One seek to turn me from the desire of my heart. I had prayed, I had spoken cursorily on the great salvation, but had met with no response ; and I saw less of our little maiden, so

that my opportunities were now fewer even than before.

Satan would fain have persuaded me that, as I had been unable to foresee this sickness, therefore prayer was void. Again—that I erred in having fixed a *time* for my prayer to be answered.

Still I had asked, and I knew it depended on Him in whom all power dwelleth. It was as easy to grant my petition now as later ; and I thought—I have asked for this soul to be brought into light, and yet not one step in faith have I taken to secure it. I rose, and rang the bell. I feebly lifted up my heart to Him who knew the utterly broken reed that He had taken up, and yet I almost trembled when the slow and rather heavy footstep of Harriet replied to my summons.

O, before that day I think I never knew that any of those who had been saved from destruction could find a difficulty in speaking of their own beloved Lord, or in telling another that He who had saved them was waiting and willing to save all who go to Him.

But I did speak for Him in broken words ; and weak, and almost weeping, I told her of the love of Jesus to poor, lost, guilty man.

The stolid expression of cool indifference that sat upon the countenance of my listener was more painful than a contradiction of the truth which I brought forward, for I could have met that with “ It is written.”

But I went on. I told her what He had done for me, and that warmed my own heart; and I read such portions of his Word as show our need of a free and full salvation, not requiring of us to do anything more than believe, in order to be saved; that Christ's work was a finished work; that we must have everlasting life before we could walk or serve. "He that believeth *hath* everlasting life."

The same gloomy face, the same hopeless silence. My heart, that in the fervor of dwelling on the loveliness of Jesus had been sanguine, now fell again.

I prayed briefly with Harriet, or rather for her; and then she rose, replaced the chair, carefully adjusted the carpet, which had been slightly disarranged, and, without the least trace of emotion on her countenance, left the room.

I sank back, almost relieved that she was gone, and that I was not called to speak another word. I rejected the idea that I had asked that which the Lord was not ready to give me. It was for his glory; and my only pleas were his love, his power, and his promise. (Matt. xxviii. 18; John xv. 7.) There were yet twenty-four hours more. What could He not do in twenty-four seconds, if it pleased Him? O thou of little faith, wherefore dost thou doubt?

Another day — the last; and again I felt led to ring for Harriet. She came, bowed down, as she told me, in the misery of unpardonable sin. I pleaded with her to go to Jesus, just as she was, now.

The temporizing flesh suggested, perhaps some circumstances in the future, some other person might be more blessed to her ; in time this soul may live, and still would be given to my prayers, and I must wait.

Nay. I had prayed, "Lord, give me Harriet's soul for my new-year's gift." That comprehended my instrumentality within a certain definite period, and in reliance that God had heard me, I had taken one step in action, and this was in testimony that I relied on his power ; for my own utter emptiness left nothing for me to rest on.

Then I cried in my heart ; such a cry as Elisha gave over the dead body of the child of the Shunammite. It was in vain to seek for another argument, to urge her not to delay an hour in seeking Him who was waiting to receive her. All seemed blank. Memory failed me ; my strength was ebbing fast. Inward silent prayer was all of which I was capable, and my cry, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth," waited only on Him. "Show me the word in thine own written promise that shall give life to the dead."

I felt like one gone to the rescue of a drowning man, myself battling with the billows, blinded by the brine, so that I could no longer point out the harbor of refuge to the shipwrecked stranger. But my feeble cry, which owned Jesus as my hope, and Jesus only, was answered speedily. I opened my Bible. Like an illuminated text, so bright and

powerful, stood out this blessed message of my covenant-keeping God: "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children; how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him!" (Luke xi. 13.) It was the voice of my Beloved. "Behold, He cometh!" "Behold, now is the day of salvation!" I read the verse aloud very slowly, and paused. "I have it!" I cried. "Kneel, and ask for the Holy Spirit to be given you now, Harriet. He will hear and answer you." Jesus was indeed passing by! O, so near, so near! We held Him, and would not let Him go.

We prayed; for there was no doubt now that the bended head and clasped hands near me were the expression of prayer such as is heard in heaven; and then there was a smothered sob, a groan — the dead was alive.

"My sins are gone, all gone!" exclaimed Harriet, as she sprang to her feet, and burst forth into praise; no longer the cool, indifferent being who had first knelt down with me, but with a face that told the joy of sin forever washed away in the blood of the Lamb slain. Blessed Jesus! He is faithful!

Through the glad tears there met me such a glance of grateful love that I shall never, never forget. That morning of joy was well worth a night of weeping.

I said, "Dear Harriet, I asked the Lord to give me your soul for a new-year's gift."

"And He has done it!" said Harriet. "My sins are gone! my heart is as light as a feather!"

I sang with Hannah in the temple of God: "For this child I prayed; and the Lord hath given me my petition which I asked of Him: therefore also I have lent her to the Lord; so long as she liveth she shall be lent to the Lord. And they worshipped the Lord there." (1 Sam. i. 27, 28.)

To all appearance my words had fallen on deaf ears, but it was not really so. I learned afterwards the exercise of that soul so soon to be reconciled to God, and brought into the goodly heritage of peace and joy in believing; and it strengthened my hand.

I was allowed to see the change clear in its evidence, and also the growth in grace, which I have now watched with tender interest for ten years. When later I was laid still more helpless on my sick-bed, Harriet arose daily before her usual time to seek in the Scriptures for some crumb of bread wherewith to sustain the life given, and committing a portion to memory, softly repeated each morning at my bedside the portion she had learned. Nor was this confined to a verse or two, but extended often to the greater part of a chapter. The comfort I found from this it is difficult to express; for the peculiar light and blessing which always followed these portions of Scripture marked the certain guidance of the Holy Ghost, and the prayerful search that my little maiden gave to the task.

This it taught me, that the Lord setteth the bounds of our habitation. There is no situation in which we are placed, but there is in it a blessing for all who wait on Him : they shall not be ashamed ! The soul that looks beyond life's unsatisfactory joys, and will trust Him unto whom all power is given both in heaven and on earth, shall find the Lord of Life in desert places, ready to open the blind eyes, and bring out the prisoner from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison-house. Then shall the dumb sing ; for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert, and the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water.

X.

THE GOLDEN CENSER.

"They cried unto thee, and were delivered: they trusted in thee, and were not confounded."—PSALM xxii. 5.

"I poured out my complaint before Him; I showed before him my trouble. When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, then thou knewest my path."—PSALM cxlii. 2, 3.

IF at a given time in the year the gate of a certain palace was opened to all comers, that every one might there present a request to the king, with the certainty of a hearing and an answer, how many petitioners would appear, how many would seek the presence-chamber before the doors were closed! How eagerly should we see the crowd pressing towards the place of grace, resolute to reach it at any cost! Anxious hearts would be counting the hours until they could spread their case before the mighty monarch.

Many would be waiting impatiently to be the earliest to appear before the wise counselor. Pleasure and business would be laid aside; household cares would cease to distress; the maid would "forget her ornaments, and the bride her attire," to present to one powerful to grant some secret desire, some craving need. Parents with rebellious children; weary hearts, heavy with cares unshared

and untold ; perplexed and downcast ones, whose weight of distress made life a burden — all would come. One had been last year, and had found freedom for a friend in prison ; another had been safely guided where to pitch his tent in a country quite unknown to him. Here is one who received news of a prodigal son long sought in vain ; here is another, whose life has been a succession of trials and sorrows, whose eyes have been fountains of tears ; but he has been to the “Good Physician” and been comforted. But how ? Ah ! you must go yourself to understand, and perhaps even after that it would be a mystery to know *how* it was done. Yet it *was* done.

Now behold a door always open, a hand powerful to aid, a heart full of love and sympathy to feel, and power to do more than you can ask or think. O sorrowful soul, why stand afar off ? The door is not shut day nor night, and every encouragement is sent to you from the loving invitation of the King to enter : “Come unto me, all ye that labor, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest !” “Enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret ; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.” (Matt. vi. 6.)

There may be many doors to shut ; close them all, for it is in closet prayer the voice of the Beloved is heard. It is in the secret of his presence that we read, “The banner over us is Love.” It is

when the attention is undivided with the things of time that the heart can pour out its secret sorrows, its hidden perplexities, at the feet of the Lord, and receive the knowledge of Him which is life, and light, and peace.

We must first believe in the power of prayer before we can realize our privilege, and we shall desire it in proportion as our experience deepens of our right to be in the place of blessing. The more diligently we make use of our prerogative, the more shall we delight in it, and recognize the value of the Father's portion purchased for us by the precious blood-shedding. Hear the words of Jesus: "*All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.*" (Matt. xxviii. 18.)

O, sinking heart, take thy need to Him. Thou wilt not have to explain thy appearance at his feet. Our great High Priest is ever officiating, and never, like Eli, misunderstanding the sighs and groans of his children waiting in bitterness of spirit. Oppressed with a sense of sin and paralyzed by unbelief, the soul may lie silent and cold. The child of God knows that a prayerless heart is one of the deepest afflictions he can endure. It may arise from peculiar trial of faith, it may be the result of disobedience, from known and unacknowledged sin, but sighs and groans are prayers. O that, like Hezekiah, we might at once spread before the Lord the letter that has sent a pang through our heart and brought the hot tears to our eyes, and wait on

Him for the cause, and look to Him to guide us how to answer it ; that, like Elijah, we could believe in the God of Israel to work in signs and wonders at our cry (1 Kings xviii. 37) ; that, like Nehemiah, we could expect that the hearts of men can be turned as rivers of water at our prayers ; like Peter's friends, that He can open the prison doors without man's intervention ; and that the God of the prophets, and patriarchs, and disciples, is *our* God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who saith, “He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also ; and greater works than these shall he do, *because I go to the Father.*” “Who-soever believeth on Him shall not be ashamed.”

Shall we never be perplexed, never be sorrowful, if we can pray ? O, yes. It is our perplexity too often that alone sends us to the mercy-seat ; it is our grief that keeps us there. But fear not : “He discovereth deep things out of darkness ” (Job xii. 22-24) ; and to understand his will we must dwell in the sanctuary. The profoundest mysteries would not satisfy the soul. It is the sanctifying and satisfying influence of the Holy Spirit which alone teaches us the practical necessity of resting on Him every hour ; and proportionately as we have sought and found the light, and we seek to follow it, shall we delight in his way.

When obstacles arise that hold you back from private prayer, look on them as Labans, and put them aside. “Hinder me not ; let me go to my

Master," was Eliezer's answer, when Laban bade him tarry ; let it be yours.

It is not in much speaking, but in definite desires, that prayer consists. There may be great noise, but little water: stones cause the uproar. We do not always know when we have the thing that we desired, because we do not understand that our Father is dealing with us in wisdom as well as love. Jesus said, " My time is not yet come, but your time is alway ready."

There is the need of a quiet persevering habit of prayer, independent of the ejaculatory prayer which will occur to the heart in daily necessities. It may be, our closet prayer is brief, but let it be true. I have seen the Lord bestowing swift and tangible answers to prayer when faith was weak, and when the heart had not long learned the way to the mercy-seat. While others, who have long known Him, and whose faith and hope He would strengthen, wait long at the door-post and watch at the gate. O, for the spiritual warriors to arise everywhere in the power of faith and prayer ! and the glory of God shall be seen, for they shall go on from faith to faith, and from strength to strength.

That a war is continually waged with the soul that enters into heavenly places there is no doubt, but the Lord who fought for Israel of old fights for Israel to-day. Not only was strength given for the battle in which they were promised victory, but a spiritual force also. " The angel of the Lord en-

campeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them."

I never realized this more fully than once off the coast of Sicily. The vessel in which I had taken my passage was to sail at midnight. The *commissionaire* who was to have attended me to the boat failed me. The hotel was at some distance from the shore. I stood in the dim starlight, with a fierce contention around me between boatmen quarreling for my luggage, and with threatening gestures insisting on an exorbitant price for conveying me to the vessel that lay at anchor about a quarter of a mile distant from the shore. My heart sank in weariness and desolation in the distressing disturbance. There was not a man who could speak or understand any language but his own *patois*. Looking up to the sky and its stars breaking forth here and there through the drifting clouds, I realized like a flash of light their Maker and mine, and I cried, "Lord, help me! and make these men give up my luggage" (for it was now being carried in all directions), "and take me to the vessel."

Like the tide receding, the loud voices of the men and their threatening gestures ceased, and the sturdy boatman, who had been the most violent, gathered my baggage from the others, assisted me into the boat, and accepted without demur the price I had at first offered. Would I have been spared that fierce encounter? Yes, if I had seen *only* the

trial ; but as the oars plashed through the waters, and I looked up to the wide vault of heaven, there came such a blessed realization of Him who had promised to deliver those that trust in Him, that I felt I could never have known it had I not experienced my extremity. (Ps. lvi. 9.)

Another answer to prayer was the granting of the desire of my heart for some Christian communion, in a dreary sojourn among the Swiss mountains, where I waited shut out from speaking of Jesus, and prevented by weakness from reading, or even walking beyond the precincts of the *châlet*. I prayed the Lord to send some Christians to the house. Some Christians came ; but, as they did not seem to need the fellowship *I* longed after, they enjoyed their mountain rambles, and I was still alone.

One sultry evening, more oppressed than before, I prayed the Lord, that if He had any amid these wild mountains whom I could cheer or help, or with whom I could take sweet counsel, He would send them ; for my way, from circumstances too complicated for this brief notice, was peculiarly trying.

So confident did I feel that He would answer the cry of his lonely child, that I rose from my knees, and descended the steps of the terrace on which the *châlet* was built, to wait for some one sent me from God. I had not long to wait. Slowly winding up the mountain pathway, a group was visible. As it

approached, it proved to be a *chaise-à-porteur*, or litter, in which was a lady, and by her side a young and graceful girl; they halted beneath the wide-spreading sycamore-trees. The attendants retreated, and a table of refreshment was spread. When they had partaken of the coffee, I advanced towards them, not for a moment doubting that my prayer was answered.

The elder lady was of middle age, with a countenance, of great intellectual refinement, but bearing traces of sorrow and sickness. Her simple, gracious bearing marked her at once of a rank in life perhaps the least accessible. The younger, whom she afterwards introduced to me as her daughter, accosted me with a frank courtesy quite in harmony with her appearance, and opened the conversation in English with an accent unusually pure. At her request, we continued it in French.

I spoke of Jesus at once — of the risen life, of the loving cup which, drunk with Him who gives it, leaves a blessing behind — and the tears of the lady fell fast, while she looked in my face with a strange expression of wonder, and begged me to take a seat by her side. Ears were opened to hear, and my tongue was unloosed to tell of this very present Lord who was dead and is alive again, and behold He is alive for evermore.

Time went rapidly by, and the shadows were falling from the mountains before the litter was prepared for the departure of the God-sent guests. I

accompanied them a short distance on their way. In parting they begged me to visit them at the château which was beyond the mountain. "For whom shall I inquire?" The elder replied, "The Princess — ;" at the same time, through her daughter, giving me her address.

After bidding me farewell, the younger lady returned, and, pressing my hand, thanked me for the words I had spoken, saying, in a voice of deep emotion, "You have done my mother much good in speaking to her of eternal things."

Many a day, when there arise recollections of my wanderings and mountain rests, my heart asks for a blessing on the Princess and her gentle daughter. This was not the only time of our meeting, but it is enough to prove the sympathy of our Lord in the cry of the lonely, and the desire to serve Him.

Dear reader, little faith works out signs and wonders, but great faith works out greater. If I set before you all my failures it would take more time than life could give me to write them. The long-suffering and loving-kindness of my gracious Lord permit me to tell you occasionally of *his* faithfulness, not mine. Be ye more faithful than I have been; and while I show you a *few* grapes from Eshcol, go ye up and take possession of its clusters. The Captain of the Lord's host is your Captain. "Be not afraid; only believe;" and many a landmark of your heavenly journey, and many a blessing in

your daily life, will shine as a star to your faith, and a beacon in the day of doubt and conflict, and bear upon its eternal tablets, "ASKED OF GOD."

THE GIFT.

"Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise." — HEBREWS x. 35, 36.

"All things are yours!" Yea, Lord, I know it ;
But O, how cold my heart must be,
To doubt the love that can bestow it,
And tarry still afar from thee !

I claim thy gift ; I come to plead it ;
Behold, I take thee at thy word ;
Thou seest how much to-day I need it —
Help for the helpless, gracious Lord ?

Look on my sick, my dumb, my dying ;
Touch thou my blind that they may see ;
This broken heart, in anguish sighing, —
I bring them one and all to thee.

My heart's best treasures, here I give them,
To be within thy temple stored ;
And as life's landmarks there I leave them,
"Because I asked [them] of the Lord."

When love would fail in fruitless yearning,
Thy golden censer wafts my prayers ;
I see the perfumed incense burning :
All things are mine, all things are theirs.

I bring the care sharp and oppressing,
The way perplexed, the path untrod ;
This feeble service for thy blessing,
O, crown it "*Given* thee of God."

I ask for patience, faith, and meekness,
And love divine that all endures :
Give me thy strength to meet my weakness,
Since thou hast said, "All things are yours."

I bring the sin my soul distressing,
That thou mayst cleanse me pure and white ;
The faint foreboding past expressing,
But clear before thy searching sight.

O, let me feel thee ever nigh me,
And seek thy smile all gifts above ;
No *good* thing will thy grace deny me,
The object of thy changeless love.

Thus shall I tread the roaring billow,
Looking to Him who hears it roar ;
Thy hand my guide, thy breast my pillow,
Lord, let me trust, and doubt no more !

Safe in the bark thou bad'st me enter,
I'll triumph in thy power divine ;
And on thy word my all I venture,
For *thou* hast said, "All things are mine."

II.

“TELL JESUS.”



PREFACE TO THE PRESENT EDITION.

THE blessing of the Lord has fallen on the words of her who “being dead yet speaketh,” — a witness for Him among the followers of the Lamb, and a testimony before a world lying in wickedness. I pray Him, in whose favor is life, to give the latter rain, even as He has bestowed the former.

Since the words which form the title of this book first chimed their heavenly music in my heart, I have prayed that they might become a song in the night to others. He whose breath gave them life has heard and answered me.

In the chamber of sickness and the house of mourning, into the Bible-woman’s home, the warehouse, and the vessel, has the hand of the Lord guided this testimony of my valued friend, and blessed it.

If I add another line to its pages, it is to testify with heartfelt gladness to the everlasting faithfulness of my covenant-keeping God.

It is in deep thankfulness that I transcribe an extract from one letter among many that have been received since these “Recollections” first went

forth, proving that they have been owned of God. And this I do, not only to encourage others to sow beside all waters, but also on account of its interesting connection with my primary reason for publishing the book.

It is as follows :—

“I gave ‘Tell Jesus’ to a young man, an artist in glass, to whom my daughter spoke in her last illness. He read the first few pages, and said, ‘I have reason to bless the Lord for that message to my soul, from the dying lips of dear L——.’ (The young milliner referred to in chapter i.) He then told me that after her decease he had entered on a new engagement, without observing that what was required of him was quite in a different style from that to which he had been accustomed. ‘All at once,’ he says, ‘I remembered her words, and through *that* I overcame the difficulty—I asked the Lord to help me.’

“His employer remarked to me afterwards, ‘He is a very odd man ; I don’t know what to make of him. When he does not know what to do, he seems to pray.’”

May there be many such “strangers here.” May this little seed become a thousand — not by might, nor by power, but by the Spirit of the Lord of hosts.

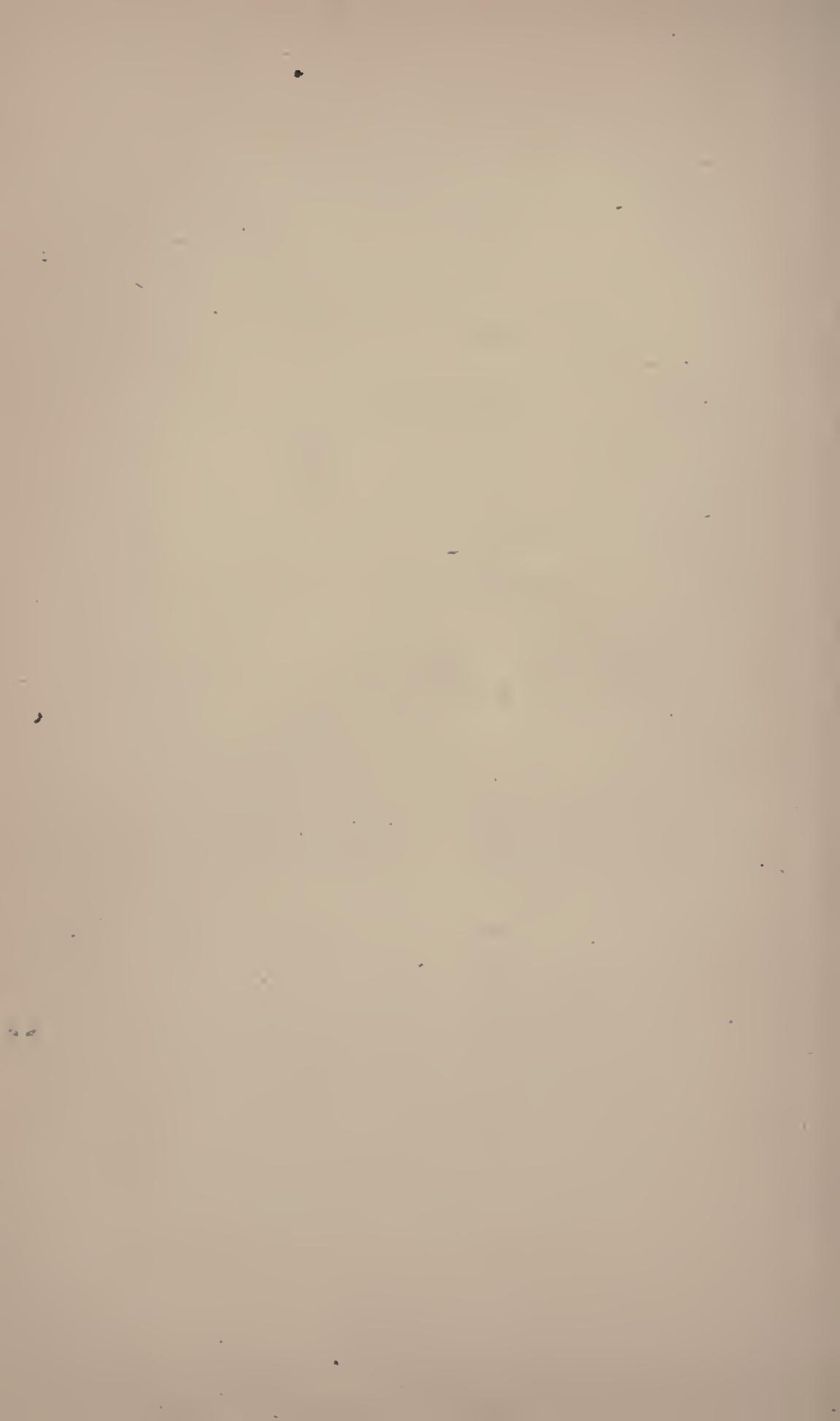
Lord ! Friend and Brother ! safe with thee be treasured
Mem’ries of countless mercies, past recall.

Thy loving-kindness is not scant or measured ;
Thou art thyself the first, best gift of all.
O Christ ! thou art the fountain ever flowing,
Love passing knowledge, knowing no decline :
'Tis love — all love — in taking and bestowing ;
This little way-side rivulet — is THINE !



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“TELL JESUS.”

I.

FRAGMENTS GATHERED.

“Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost. Therefore they gathered them together.” — JOHN vi. 12, 13.

MY recollections of one dear to us, and dearer still to God, have no pretension to be termed a *mémoir*.

Out of the many testimonies that Emily Gosse bore for her beloved Lord; my memory most vividly retains those which affected my own spiritual life ; this has, therefore, obliged me to write more of myself than I desired.

My acquaintance with her, which was rapidly to ripen into an everlasting friendship, began only in the last two years of her earthly pilgrimage, and I did but gather up the crumbs from the table at which she feasted with the King. These have been multiplied, as the fragments of old, and have nourished others ; for the Lord commanded them to be gathered.

Among many witnesses to the blessing which has

followed the simple incidents of the following pages, and induced me to commit them to the press, was a dear Christian girl, to whom the recital bore a message as distinct as the angel's commission to the women at the tomb of the risen Jesus.

A fortnight after I had told her of the value to my soul of the two words which form the title of my "Recollections," she said :—

"Last Monday I was asked by Mrs. ——" (a West End milliner to whom she was apprenticed) "to take a bonnet to a lady in Hyde Park. It was required by a certain hour. Quite unexpectedly to me, when I arrived at the house, the lady desired some alteration to be made, and I was requested to go into the drawing-room and make it there, as not sufficient time remained for me to return with it.

"The work was beyond my experience ; I was so nervous, I could not thread my needle ; I was afraid to touch what our best hands had put together. I knew not what to do ! The servant placed the materials before me, and explained what was required, and I was left alone.

"All at once the words you said the last time I came to you flashed through my mind : 'Do not fret ; tell Jesus — tell Jesus everything ; He will guide and help you.' I thought, as I looked at the white tulle and flowers, 'Can I ask Him to help me with this bonnet ?' You had told me that Mrs. Gosse had said, that she would ask Jesus to guide her to a pin, if she wanted one.

“ I did tell Jesus ; I asked to be directed in my difficult task, and also for the lady to be disposed to like the bonnet when it was finished. Soon I lost all nervousness ; the alteration was completed, and the lady returned for answer that it was quite to her taste. Then, for the first time, I understood the meaning of a ‘ Living Jesus,’ and from that hour I learnt the comfort of telling Him everything.”

And it was true. After that time there was a vitality in the spiritual life of this dear child, which is often sorely lacking in more advanced Christians. Without Jesus, we can do nothing ; with Him, all things are possible. We may darken counsel by words without knowledge. Vainly of ourselves we set bread before the hungry. Unless he eat thereof, however much he admires the feast, it profiteth him nothing.

This early gathered blossom was another seal to the faithfulness of Him who saith, “ Them that honor me, I will honor.” The most striking feature of her new life, in the brief hour of testimony accorded to her below, was the simplicity of her faith, which enabled her to realize unceasing fellowship with Jesus, to the joy of her own soul, and the strengthening and refreshing of others.

To the faint-hearted, who see little or no result from their labors, I would say, “ Be patient.” It was only in the last days of her life that my helpful friend knew that in any way she had been blessed to me. I did not at once use the privilege which

she had shown me was mine ; but, blending with her unconscious influence, the seed was more efficiently taking root, and fulfilling that for which I had been sent to her. I "kept all these things, and pondered them" in my heart.

I lacked the realization of that first truth, that the Son of God, in the glory of the Father, which He had with Him before the foundation of the world, remained in his high-priestly office the Son of Man, touched with the feeling of our infirmities. And of the perfect humanity of Jesus, which made Him still the Brother born for adversity, I knew nothing.

The daily life of one whose eye is single is full of light, and cannot fail to speak for God. "They shall not labor in vain, nor bring forth for trouble ; for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them." But of the times and seasons when this shall be manifest knoweth no man. We walk by faith; not by sight. It is enough that He has said that our labor for Him shall not be in vain. Prayer is answered, we know ; but there is no promise as to manner or time : God's way is the safest ; God's time is the best.

The dews of many a night of weeping, and the scorching breath of many a furnace fire, passed over the Word of Life in my soul before I entered into its power ; therefore, while we watch and pray, let us hope in God. "Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath

long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain ! ”

Dear reader, if you know Jesus as your Saviour, beware lest Satan beguile you to believe that you have one want or care too minute for the consideration of the God of the whole earth. All things were made by Him, and for Him.

Soon after I began to observe this truth, I was sitting, in a time of weakness and loneliness, on the sea-shore — a stranger in a strange place. It soothed me to watch the tide, as it ebbed, sweep away or deposit some stray shell or weed upon the strand ; and I mused on the mission of some of the treasures that, in its mighty tide-work, the sea brought or left behind.

It was an evening in autumn, and not a loiterer was left on the shore, excepting a nurse and two young children — the elder a fine boy of about four years old.

The child looked wistfully at me. I smiled at him, and he returned it. In a few minutes I felt a light touch upon my arm, and his blooming cheek was laid on my knee, as he earnestly gazed in my face with an expression of loving sympathy. Perhaps he had some sick one at home, and knew the power of his sweet smiles. No matter ; God sent him.

We talked together like old friends, and my heart lost its loneliness beneath the loving ministration.

At length he started off beyond my reach. I

watched him eagerly seeking among the weeds for shells. One after another he held them to the light, casting aside each one that was broken, as unsuitable for his purpose.

At last his busy fingers held up one which gave him satisfaction, and after examining it carefully, he polished it with his coat, and then, with a triumphant smile, advanced and laid it on my knee ; then, stepping back a few paces, he evidently enjoyed my unfeigned delight. “*For you,*” he lisped out, — “only for you — all for you,” as if I might doubt my right to his gift.

Amid tender words and kisses we said farewell, and my little God-sent messenger reluctantly obeyed the call of his nurse, and followed her.

The shell lay in my hand ; my soul had risen like a lark above the clouds ; and, with a glad “Hallelujah,” I praised the God of the whole earth.

Again the little fellow was at my side, breathless. He gave an anxious glance at the shell, and then looked coaxingly in my face, while he said, “You will not give it away, will you?” I assured him I would keep it and prize it for his sake. The child was gone, and I saw him no more.

I do not own many treasures ; if I have any, I count that fragile shell among the choicest of them — a token from my heavenly Father’s hand. His baby minstrel had tuned my heart to songs of gladness : his music, the lisping words of a child ; his instrument, a tiny, transparent shell, that not a wave could break without his will.

I went on my way rejoicing.

Such an incident is puerile to those who have not cherished the remembrance of sadness and tears, which manifested the soothing hand of the compassionate God-man while He whispered, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."

Some few years ago, a remarkable trial for murder took place in Paris. The facts were briefly as follows: A man who had lived unhappily with his wife determined to poison her. Long he waited his opportunity of administering the deadly powder. One day, during their dinner, while serving, the husband mixed the poison in his wife's food ; but when he had done so, he could not endure to see her eat it, and, making some excuse, he arose and left the table. During his absence from the room, and before the wife could partake of the food, her eye was attracted by a spider, which let itself down by its thread from the ceiling upon her plate, over which it crawled. Disgusted at the sight, she could not eat her portion, but thinking that, as her husband had not seen it, it would not affect him, she changed their plates before he reentered the room. The man ate, and in a short time was seized with cramp, and every symptom of poison was evident. The woman was taken into custody on suspicion of having poisoned him. She declared her innocence, and, on being questioned, related the circumstance of the spider, which caused her to change the plates. The husband, struck by the wonderful work of a little

spider in staying his hand from murder, confessed all, and died.

The ant, the spider, the limpet on the rock, the mote that dances in the sunbeam, have each their assigned place ; and He who created them can use them for his own will and pleasure. He formed the mysterious chords within us, that thrill oradden beneath a touch, discerned by none but Himself. Nor is He who rules the worlds unmindful of the least want or sigh of the soul that He has died to save.

“Casting ALL your care upon Him,” does not imply such concerns as the natural intellect may decide on as fit occasions for faith and prayer. It necessarily includes *whatsoever* can burden, or tempt, or grieve a child of that Father, who declares that the very hairs of our head are numbered.

Prove the blessed truth of faith in Jesus. Give Him the first place in your heart and counsels ; soon you will feel that you cannot do without Him in the least matter, and every occasion of going to Him will result in new manifestations of his love and faithfulness. Only try it !

Whate'er thy sin, whate'er thy sorrow be,
Tell all to JESUS ; He who, looking where
The weary-hearted weep, still draweth near
To listen fondly to the half-formed prayer,
And read the silent pleading of a tear.
Lose not thy privilege, O silent soul !
Pour out thy sorrow at thy Saviour's feet.

What outcast spurns the hand that gives the dole ?
O, let Him hear thy voice ! To Him thy voice is sweet.

I am greatly indebted to Mr. Gosse for permission to extract from his narrative, "the last days on earth" of his beloved wife.

I also acknowledge the affectionate testimony of one who knew her worth, and walked with her in an unbroken friendship for nearly twenty years. Among the cups of cold water, given because we belong to Jesus, may He remember her heart-cheering sympathy in this feeble effort to bear witness to the experimental blessedness of fellowship with God in Christ Jesus ; not only for ourselves and for the Church, but before the world. It is committed to Him whose blessing can alone cause it to speak for Him, and to Him be all the glory.

I have but gathered one ear of the precious grain of Emily Gosse's harvest : sowing and reaping, we shall rejoice together.

II.

THE MEMORY OF THE JUST.

"The memory of the just is blessed."—PROV. x. 7.

AND who are the just? Even those who, "being justified by faith, have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ." Of such a one are my recollections.

I was still groping in the twilight of spiritual dawn when I first met Emily Gosse. She appeared to me then, as she lives in my memory to this hour, as one of God's epistles, known and read of all men, whose influence, through the love therein written, leaves the reader nearer heaven than it found him.

I had passed from death unto life, though I was not peacefully resting on the infallible testimony of the Word of God that it was so. I was seeking for assurance from the ever-varying testimony of feeling, incumbered by errors and superstitions, and only a little while before had I even known the way of salvation. I acknowledged that Jesus, the only-begotten Son of God, was the Saviour of sinners, and that therefore, knowing myself a sinner, I might lay claim to redemption from eternal death through Him. But I was seldom able to say, "*My* Saviour." That He had saved me from the doom of the scorner, I could

understand ; but as my Saviour from sin, as the Good Physician, as the Counselor of my daily difficulties, as the risen, living Jesus, the Companion and Friend of my life, I had not then beheld Him.

Until I met Emily Gosse, I had never seen a child of God following the Lord fully, in happy, cheerful confidence ; nor witnessed Christ and his glory in the life of man or woman, as the one sole object of their existence. The sight of it in her won my heart to desire the same happy path of single-eyed service. I remember with what silent delight I watched her unconscious testimony for *Him*, who was ere long to be realized in my soul as my own living, loving Lord !

I had arranged to pass the last summer months of that to me eventful year in the near neighborhood of old friends, pleasant to me after the flesh, but in no wise adapted to lead me on the heavenly road, on which, though blindfolded and lame, I had set forth.

Business required my presence in London, previously to taking possession of my apartments. While there, a lady, almost a stranger, called, and requested, as a personal favor, that I would accompany a young relative to the coast, partly with a view to change of air, but more particularly to give her and a friend the opportunity of meeting with Mr. Gosse, for the purpose of studying the world of wonders beneath the waters, for which his interesting works had prepared them. To this day, when

my eyes rest upon an aquarium (for never since that year have I seen those mysterious sea-flowers in the crystal pools of their own rocky homes), I retrace the links which drew me nearer to the great Creator of their beauty, and read therein, not only tokens of his infinite wisdom, but a message of love known only to Him and me.

My plans were made, and very pleasant plans they seemed. They had been formed without any reference to the will of the Lord in the matter. I knew, by the hearing of the ear, that He taketh heed of the fall of the sparrow, yet I honored Him not by believing that *He* setteth the bounds of the habitation of the feeblest child of his family. I had not disregarded my proximity to the means of grace, in my settlement in my new abode ; but I had equally sought to be near my friends.

I at once declined the invitation to the coast, and that so decidedly, that the lady could no longer press it, and we parted. The Lord was guiding, though blind eyes saw it not. On the eve of my quitting London the lady returned, more urgent in her request than even before. Perhaps she had prayed that it might be granted ; certain it is, that the Lord's purpose of infinite love was in it ; for suddenly, without being able to assign any cause for the change in my feelings, all my former disinclination to her proposal vanished. Without any further objection, I consented to accompany her young friends to Ilfracombe, whither they were going for

the purpose of studying the zoöphytes, in which pursuit they were deeply interested.

In place, therefore, of returning to my self-chosen nest, I went forth, and continue up to this day a pilgrim, whose only home is in heaven.

It was a dreary and fatiguing journey, and its termination offered nothing to compensate for much that I had given up to undertake it. I felt weary and lonely, as every living soul must be, apart from the changeless peace which is found in Jesus only.

The second week of our stay had closed, and I was ardently longing for the time of our departure ; by my heavenly Father had ordained it all, and had guided me, though I knew it not. It was at this juncture that He sent to my side the wise and tender minister of good tidings, in the wife of the Christian naturalist of whom I was hearing so much.

Directly I saw the face of Mrs. Gosse, I longed to know her better ; she was fair, and appeared more youthful than her years, from her small, delicate features, and the artless child-like smile which lighted her countenance when animated. I have seen it literally sparkling with joy, when unexpectedly brought into contact with those who loved her Lord, or when recognizing some expression of his ever-watchful care.

Whether the Lord veiled the state of my spiritual life from her, I know not. I listened to her with unmixed pleasure, though I hardly dare aver that I was fed. But I marked her steps, and they chimed

sweet music ; the bells proclaimed "holiness unto the Lord." There was much new and strange to me ; some intermediate tones seemed lacking in my soul for perfect harmony between what I had received and that which I beheld in her.

Anticipations of a home undisturbed by sin or sorrow, where I could forever behold Jesus, had often filled my heart with gladness. I read that He was gone to prepare a place for his people, and had promised to come again and receive them to Himself. These thoughts brooding in my soul became more tangible, as I saw her daily rejoicing in the expectation of the return of the Lord Jesus, with the assurance of faith born only of the Spirit.

But how could I rejoice in the coming of the Lord, when I was not at all sure that He was coming for *me*? I felt, for the first time, the power of the life of a child of God, walking with Him in cheerful, child-like confidence in his love. I yearned for that good land which she possessed, though I was not at all convinced that *her* blessed inheritance was, could be, for one so unworthy ; for me, such a sinner !

I had never seen the simplicity of faith which ever walks in heavenly humility. Not the humility of servile fear, which the world recognizes in sighs and groans over the old Adam's utter corruption ; but the trustful gaze fixed on Jesus, that says, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief ; therefore my hope is in Him.

He is my strength, and the lifter up of my head.” Such a posture of soul better glorifies the Lord of life than when our eyes rise no higher than self, forgetting that we were created for his praise.

I so feebly apprehended the high-priestly office of Him who was exalted for the remission of sins, that I thought I had still something to *do*; and that perhaps for years, to test my sincerity, before I could live with Jesus in the same sweet familiar intimacy as my new friend.

She was a wise mother in Israel; she did not cavil at my crude opinions, nor combat my errors. She did not argue points of difference, which would have arrayed my dominant pride and obstinacy against her; neither did she appear amazed at my ignorance. Her aim was to show Jesus in his love and loveliness.

The love of God in Christ beamed through her words and life; like sunshine melting away the clouds of prejudice, and dispelling gradually my fleshly dread of irreverence in taking advantage, with the freedom of access that she enjoyed, of that door into heaven, which the precious blood-shedding had opened. (John x., 7, 9; Heb. x. 19-22.)

It was preëminently JESUS that she preached; his beauty, his loving-kindness, his tender mercy! and though that happy, happy day had not then arrived when I could exclaim, “This is my Beloved, and this is my Friend!” yet, by the blessing of God,

I count her insensible influence among the many cords of love that won my weary, roving heart to find its rest in Him alone.

While Mr. Gosse and my young friends were exploring, with the ardor of naturalists, the treasures of the deep with the drag-net, or rambling over the rocks of the picturesque beach, I was, from inability to join them, generally within doors, or sitting on the shore not far from our lodgings.

There I occasionally met Emily, who, like a good householder, brought out of her treasure things new and old from the store of Christ's fullness.

Yet all this time she had a mother's eye upon her young son, whom she carefully watched in his amusements and companions. Many a lesson might nurses and governesses have learned from her. In clear characters might be read on all she did and said, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

Our interviews were always brief, generally interrupted, and not unfrequently prevented altogether. I remember that this caused me to feel irritated and disappointed, as the natural willfulness of my character desired more of her society than the Lord saw fit to accord me.

Besides this, I was selfish, and she was unselfish ; I longed to keep her all to myself, while she sought only to be about her Father's business. She loved to wander among the groups assembled under the rocks, or among the bathers, distributing her tracts,

and dropping a word elsewhere for her dear Master when opportunity offered ; while I would have chosen her to sit by my side.

All this was not without its lesson. After those days were gone, I murmured against myself that I had profited so little from them. Doubtless, the Lord's set time was not fully come. He who had found me in a desert land, and in a waste, howling wilderness, was leading me about, and instructing me, and (blessed be his name !) keeping me as the apple of his eye.

So, day by day, Emily Gosse went on her way, sowing beside all waters. The joy of harvest home is reserved for the great ingathering. For myself, it was only in more entire seclusion from the outer world, and in deeper affliction, that I learned the mystery of the new birth in the promise, "Because I live, ye shall live also ;" the Lord Himself, without human instrumentality, leading me into the truths which delivered me out of bondage into his glorious liberty. Certain it is, that when the King had brought me into the full secret of his presence, and had taught me the endearing relationship of "Father," my happy friend was resting from her labors.

I saw Emily working for Jesus ; I did nothing ; how could I, when I only believed at distant intervals that my sins were forgiven ? How could I tell of the faithfulness of a covenant God, when I was

so often doubting his word, and dishonoring Him by unbelief of his truth?

And yet, when I rejoiced in the assurance that the Good Shepherd had indeed snatched me from the pit, I wept to think I had never won a soul for Him who had done so much for me. My thought was, If I knew Him, and really loved Him, I could work for Him ; not until then.

In one of those seasons of depression, when too ill to quit the house, these temptations especially assailed me. That day I listened to a lesson from the lips of my new-found friend, which I have ever since been learning ; that the subjection which leads us to accept the position the wisdom of the Lord assigns us, is our reasonable service. Long-suffering and meekness and patience are fruit, though often unacknowledged by any but Him ; fruit accepted for Christ's sake, for it is the growth of his Spirit.

Emily had a peculiar faculty of illustrating her subject in conversation, which was very attractive, and this was a point of sympathy between myself and her ; in all else, it was hardly possible to find a greater contrast, or two individuals more dissimilar.

Our conversation this day called forth the following illustration :—

“The master of the house has a servant whom he has appointed to sit in the hall (perhaps alone), and only attend to his bell when it rings. This

man may not often be required for the particular service to which this bell will summon him ; nevertheless he is not to be doing his own pleasure in the intervals.

“Would he be fulfilling the duty for which he was specially placed there, if, when he saw his fellow-servants engaged in their respective callings, running hither and thither, he joined them, and so, when the bell rung, he was not in the only chair where he could distinctly hear it ; and had, moreover, placed himself in a position which rendered him unfit for the peculiar service required of him ? Neither,” she added, with an arch smile, “should we expect the servant who knew his lord’s will to be unhappy, and continually running up stairs and knocking impatiently at his master’s door, to know what he was to do next. The master had already shown him what he was to do,—to wait in the hall.

“So now, your service is plain enough ; you must remember ‘Old Betty.’ Once the Lord seemed to say to her, ‘Go here, go there ; do this, do that.’ ‘And now,’ the old woman said, ‘He seems to say to me, Betty, lie still and cough.’”

There was nothing of the teacher in Emily, though she was deeply taught of God. Blessing seemed to flow out from her life, according to the promise, in rivers of living water. (John vii. 38.) Who shall follow the track of the little seed that is carried on the wings of the wind ? God careth for it ; it shall be found after many days.

Whether her attention was directed to a child, or to a babe in Christ, or to a Bible student in the examination of a Greek word, there was no assumption of pedantry or superior knowledge, which is so often the loop-hole for Satan to shoot at the proud in heart, even in holy teaching ; and I feel assured that this must have arisen from her knowledge of her own heart, and her trust in the strength of Him to whom all power in heaven and earth is given.

All God's family bear some resemblance to their Father, however faint, which proclaims their heavenly origin to those who know Him. The germ of all the fruit of the Holy Spirit is contained in the new man in Christ Jesus. Perhaps some feature is more developed externally, by reason of special culture of the heavenly Husbandman, through special trials ; but other buds of promise are there, opening to his eye alone, unrecognized by others. Many a night and morning, many a winter and summer, may go by before they put forth their fragrance, but they are there.

Dormant they lie, they are not dead ;
Sown for Emmanuel's land,
They'll bloom where heavenly fountains flow,
Beneath his fostering hand.

A little while we suffer here,
A little while we weep ;
A little while we dare the fight,
And holy watch we keep.

And then — no more a little while
To sigh and struggle thus ;
But live forever, conquerors,
With Him who loveth us.

Love sheds its light over all, and seems to energize the branch which draws from the root, and gives forth to others. For love shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost is a fountain of blessing wherever it flows. It shone in Emily Gosse's daily life.

I have seen her cheek flush, and her ready sympathy fill her eyes with tears, at wrong committed against another ; I never saw her ruffled with any one, if the wrong were directed against herself personally.

It was long before I recognized the hand of man as the sword of the Lord (Isa. liv. 16), but when I had done so, it was a well of peace to my heart. Before this, I remember that in bitterness of spirit I one day recounted some mortifying provocation that I had received from a nominal Christian ; it touched her heart far otherwise than it had done mine. I seem to feel the loving pressure of her hand upon my shoulder now, as she looked tenderly in my face through the tears that glistened for what I had suffered, as she said, "O, how much pride there must be to subdue in your heart, for the dear Lord to let you be treated thus ! "

Now I have learned to recognize the hand of the

Potter ; and on looking back on those sorrowful days, I have traced the moulding skill, breaking away the clay that incumbers the vessel of mercy ; and, though now He has other instruments for fashioning it, I love to trace it still ; and soon, in the light of his unclouded presence, what we know not now, we shall know hereafter. I was more reserved with her than with any one before or since ; and yet the ministry I received was exactly suited for what I should afterwards need in more severe trial.

On one occasion I refused to tell her what had saddened me, only because I thought the cause would appear trifling to her. Like her blessed Master, she found nothing beneath her sympathy that could cause one throb of pain.

She would not quit me until she had soothed me, and this ended, of course, in my telling her all. She listened with as much interest as if she had to unravel some deep mystery. She sat for a few minutes in silence, and then asked, with the simplicity that characterized her, "*Did you tell Jesus?*" Perhaps I looked surprised ; I am sure I felt so ; yet to her the only surprise would be, that anything could call forth our complaints to another which had not first been told to Jesus.

She continued, "If I want a pin, and do not know where to find one, I do not lose any time in seeking for it. I ask Him to guide me to one, and He does so. Tell me, what did John's disciples do in their grief at the loss of their master ? "

I thought only of his burial, and she went on, “They took up the body and buried it, and went and told Jesus.”

That word was a shaft followed by God’s faithful promise : “For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater : so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth : it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.” (Isa. lv. 10, 11.)

The rod laid up within the ark for me that day will be seen through eternal ages ; it budded, and in time blossomed. Many a hope have I buried, over many a blighted one have I wept ; but the budding rod bore fruit at last. Blessed be the covenant-keeping God ! The message of my Father’s love that Emily brought me has never since that hour been silent. Dead lips speak no more ; their echo dies not, but rolls through eternity, — “Tell Jesus.”

In the cloud I have been called to enter, I have heard no man, but Jesus only. This is more than enough for the loneliest and dreariest path !

I was by this time a little prepared, when I paid her a visit, and admired the pleasant apartments which they occupied, overlooking the sea, to hear her reply :—

“Yes ! it was very kind of the Lord ; we had

asked Him to guide us to suitable rooms, both for airy lodgings, for health's sake, and also for other advantages," which she proceeded to show me.

Her cheerful acquiescence, at the same time, in what was denied her, was as striking as her happy acknowledgment of what appeared to be the most trifling thing to others eyes.

This was the first intimation I received of the Good Shepherd going before his sheep, in the minute care for their change of habitation, and of the sheep knowing his voice, and following Him in peaceful security. (John x. 4.)

He has not called us to go forth in our own strength, but in our weakness, that his strength may be perfected in it.

In committing ourselves to Him for a "prosperous journey," we may at first feel amazed at the result ; but if taken in simple reliance on Him, who can best choose our inheritance for us, we shall in the end see his wisdom and love. If we are seeking only to follow Him, He will not let us wander out of the way ; if we are seeking something not really needful, and the indulgence of our own will and pleasure (James iv. 3), He may indeed give us the desire of our heart, and send leanness into our soul. If the Good Shepherd grants us his reviving presence, we may well leave all the rest to Him, assured that if He has withheld anything that appeared to us "good," it has only been to give us something better.

III.

A VISION.

‘All things are yours.’—*1 Cor. iii. 21.*

“For God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not. In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed ; then He openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction.”—*JOB xxxiii. 14-16.*

SOON after these days I had a remarkable dream ; if indeed I can term that a dream which appeared to me as a panorama of glorious significance, and in which I had no part but that of a spectator.

I beheld a chamber, dark with clouds. In the centre stood Emily. Angel hands from out the murky atmosphere clothed her in a heavy purple robe, the weight of which bent her body, pale and emaciated, almost to the earth.

She walked as if in pain and weariness ; but in their hands they bore her up, lest she should dash her foot against a stone.

The darkness passed, and her feet were set in that “large room,” that lacketh neither light nor freedom ; it was open to the sky. Beneath the angels’ ministering hands the heavy robe at every step gradually disappeared, and more and more visibly shone another robe, of surpassing beauty, in

which they clothed her. She did nothing towards making herself ready: all was done for her. Her attitude was that of a happy, innocent, obedient child, under the tender care of a mother who arrays her in her festal garments.

How can I describe things unseen by others, but by objects visible to the outward eye? I know nothing to compare to that robe, white as the driven snow. Art and nature can give but a faint idea of its beauty. Its dazzling and transparent folds were fairer than the most delicate lawn, and glis- tened like the hoar-frost in its silver brightness.

As the robe descended to her feet, her countenance lost all trace of time, and pain, and weariness; it was renewed, and beamed with youth, and health, and comeliness. It was still Emily Gosse! growing fairer at every step, as, conducted by heavenly guides, she neared a two-leaved door; which, slightly ajar, permitted a few bright, slanting rays of golden light to fall upon the step.

The sight of her child appeared to arrest the happy pilgrim. She paused. Immediately the angelic hands were withdrawn into the clouds,— no longer the dark, heavy clouds of the smaller chamber, but the summer clouds of the “large room.” A basket of fruit was near her. She seemed to search amongst it for the ripest, and chose what appeared to me then a Maltese or blood orange; for it was divided down the centre, and appeared of a bright crimson color, but which may have represented a pomegranate.

When the child had received the fruit, Emily appeared satisfied, and her angel attendants resumed their office of leading her onwards. Her every movement exactly resembled that of a blind person, committing herself unreservedly to the safe conduct of a Friend who knew the way, and guided every step, to the home where *she* was a welcome guest.

“As when some helpless wanderer,
Alone in an unknown land,
Tells the guide his destined place of rest,
And leaves all else in his hand.
'Tis home, 'tis home that we wish to reach ;
He who guides us may choose the way ;
Little we heed what path we take,
If nearer home each day.”

The chamber was crossed ; she stood upon the step of the entrance, and the door gradually opened. Within, a street was visible, clear as crystal, bright with golden rays surpassing sunlight. On the side revealed to my sight were open galleries of most delicate tracery ; these were filled with angelic forms bent in expectation towards the door ; thousands of glorious beings thronged to welcome the new-comer ; every head was turned towards the entrance.

The unutterable peace of the pilgrim's face as she proceeded I have never forgotten, nor the rest which her closed eyes expressed ; I have often thought it intimated that this vision of her spirit-beauty, given me to behold, was as yet hidden from

her eyes. Her foot was on the threshold, and then all faded from my sight.

That wondrous scene lives in my memory, as if photographed on my mind's eye ; but how describe it? I vainly seek for words to paint its beauty to others.

Often it was on my lips to tell Emily the " dream that I had dreamed." She was essentially a practical person, and I dreaded that she would not receive the sweet, and to me solemn, vision, and I held my peace.

However, doubtless it was sent to her through me ; for I felt a shadow and oppression on my soul until I had told her.

One morning, most unexpectedly, I was led to describe it to her. To my surprise, she listened in rapt attention ; and after a few days she requested me to repeat my golden dream.

She remarked, "I have thought *only* of the Lord's coming — not of walking through the Valley of the Shadow of Death. Perhaps He will send for me, after all."

But she was well, and strong, and bright, and prepared to meet Him for whom she watched. She walked with her garments girded and her light burning ; she was indeed one who watched for her Lord.

Soon after this, Mr. and Mrs. Gosse left for London, and I heard no more of her until the following spring, when I received a note reminding me of my

promise to visit her ; and as I was then at a convenient distance from London, she invited me to spend two days with her in the following week. I did so.

I had scarcely arrived, when, as was often the case, she was sent for on some errand of mercy, and, as she said, "to keep me company until her return," she placed in my hands "A Narrative of the Lord's Dealings with George Müller," a work of which I had never before heard.

If Emily Gosse's faith in the daily watchful care of her Almighty Friend had startled me, she had now left me food for meditation, wonder, admiration, and love.

God is good ! I never for a moment doubted this reality ; and I read on, and on, until I came to a passage in which Mr. Müller narrates how he once had need of an arm-chair in his bedroom, when an invalid on a visit to a friend, and how the Lord tenderly took heed of the want, so that when he next entered his bed-chamber, he found it there.

Of the sums this man of God has won from heaven's treasury, for the support of thousands of orphans, for the extension of the building, for the circulation of the Scriptures, and the help of missionary laborers, I have read and marveled. But when this simple fact of the care of his heavenly Father was recorded, it had another mission. It was just fitted for my grasp ; the tiny thread of faith which just such a babe could hold. It drew

me on until I realized, "This God is my God forever and ever ; He shall be my guide even unto death ! "

I longed for the book. I did not ask for the loan of it ; I was too poor to purchase it. The Lord's way was the best ; I had learned experimentally something of the faith that worketh by love, before I again turned the pages over which I hung that afternoon in delight. I felt more and more the contrast of this faith, that was constantly honoring the Lord by believing his word, and confiding in his love, to that of a doubting spirit born of an evil heart of unbelief ; and I thirsted for the good land beyond Jordan. It also led me to remark how God blesses the household where his ark rests, and that it is impossible to dwell with those who walk with a living God, and not partake of their blessings.

That night for me was sleepless. It was the Lord's dear hand in all, and but for it I should have failed to read another trait of Himself in my gentle hostess.

The morning had hardly broken when she quietly opened my door, and brought to my side the breakfast which her thoughtful care had provided. She had lighted the fire in her husband's study to avoid disturbing the servants ; she had heard my restlessness, and was ever on the watch to serve.

When I told her how grieved I was for her to rise to do this, her reply was like herself, —

" Supposing yesterday Jesus had rested in your lodgings on his way to Jerusalem, weary with his journey, and you knew He had been watching all night, should you have thought it any hardship to rise an hour or two earlier than usual to give Him refreshment? - Jesus could not come Himself, He sent you, and He says to me, ' Inasmuch as you have done it unto *her*, you have done it unto me.' "

Thus we feel the need of having a poor and afflicted people among us, that there may be a field for the ministration of the disciples of Jesus to the Man of Sorrows in the person of his suffering members. Numberless are the occasions it affords of exhibiting his tender love towards those that serve, as well as to them that are served. Sitting often at his feet, we shall learn the secret of his will, and hearing his voice, we shall learn the way to do it, by which we shall most resemble Him in the doing.

The little loving charities of daily life preach loudly for Him who went about doing good. The testimony that it is for Jesus will make the even tenor of the walk glorify Him ; whereas, if kindness and forbearance be shown only to please ourselves, or for the gratification of another, they will be fitful, and witness nothing of the living faith to proclaim Him whose we are and whom we serve.

Of all the blessings that gladden our earthly pilgrimage, sympathy is the sweetest ; of all the gifts of God, a friend is the chief. The man of science has his associate ; the man of crime his accomplice ;

the man of pleasure his companion ; and in all these there is sympathy, but not friendship : that comprehends an enduring affection resting on sympathy ; it cannot endure, if built on the things that are passing away, or that shall be burned up.

A friend in Jesus is a gift, but Jesus, the Friend, is the priceless Friend.

And can such things be ? Yes. The Man of Sorrows is the Brother born for adversity, as every day's need requires. Fellowship with Him can cast a light and glory over life's common things. If we think that brotherhood with Jesus comprehends only a fellowship in sorrow and difficulty, the privilege is immeasurably great ; but this is limiting his friendship, or placing Him in the position of Patron and Benefactor, rather than of Brother and Friend.

When we live in close sympathy with another, we receive and impart every moment. Take a day passed with a friend, unrecorded by any remarkable event ; such a day as an uninterested observer might pronounce a very commonplace one. It has not been commonplace to *you*. The glance comprehended without a word spoken ; the smile that has recognized your thought ; the trifling need that has made a way for a gift valueless to any one but you, and precious to you as a memento of the hand that gave, and the circumstance that drew it forth : all these footprints of time leave the day, so uneventful to others, full of sweet memories to loving hearts.

Why deal with your heavenly Friend with more

strangeness and less confidence than with an earthly friend, and desire his help and sympathy only in seasons of extremity? Yet is He found of them that call upon Him only in the hour of need; He cannot deny Himself. "In their affliction they will seek me early." But why not accept that companionship which throws a light over the minute working of his providence, and gives a voice to the interpreters of his love, hour by hour, moment by moment?

Is it the carnal or the spiritual man which objects, that there are numberless things and circumstances too insignificant to bring before the God of the whole earth? Does the word of God state them? or, *who* is so wise as to declare what is really great or small in the sight of Omnipotence? Shall we then say, "I will trust my soul to the God of my mercies, but not my mercies themselves;" and in some extremity call on Him for deliverance, but in the burden of daily trials dishonor Him by distrusting his care, and doubting his love?

Who shall pronounce what has an influence on the spiritual life, and what has not? The minute grain of sand that obscures the sight may ultimately destroy it. The thorn in the traveller's foot, a key lost or mislaid, and meaner things than any I have enumerated, may cast shadows on the strongest mind, and change the current of a life; while such despised things have been among the golden links that draw the soul nearer, to realize a living God.

Will you call it "bondage" to cast all upon the sympathizing heart of the Man Christ Jesus? O! trembling hearts, perplexed and weary, it is no fable — it is the glorious liberty of the children of God, to "trust in Him at *all* times."

He does not bid you seek Him in unapproachable glory; He comes to you as one of your brethren. In all things He was tempted even as you are, yet without sin; He once hungered and thirsted, He was weary, lonely, misunderstood. You have no want or woe that He has not tasted; you have no joy which you could pour into that heart of love to which it would not respond.

I write to you who know Him and love Him, and yet live at such an immeasurable distance from Him that you are uttering your complaints of your coldness and unhappiness in the ears of others, "physicians of no value," who cannot fathom your wound, or heal your disease. Why wait till the waters are troubled? Tell Jesus.

An early diary of Emily's, lent me by her husband on this occasion, consists principally of notes to assist her memory, but otherwise it is too obscure to enable me to trace much that would be interesting in the growth and development of the divine life in her soul. Brief as is the entry, which bears the date 1835, it is strongly marked by the single-mindedness of one who even then walked, as she ever afterwards did, with an exercised conscience, though ever fully realizing the finished work of

Jesus, and her acceptance in Him ; from which we glean the desires of her heart towards a clearer light and more devoted walk. To those who had the privilege of knowing her, it very imperfectly shadows the work of grace that was developed in the noon of her life.

She complains of the plague of her own heart, like those who know "their own sore and their own grief ;" of her unbelief, selfishness, and wandering in prayer ; her bitterness of speaking of the faults of others.

The Hearer and Answerer of prayer — more willing to glorify Himself in his servant than any can be to glorify Him — indeed granted her abundantly that which she had requested. Great is the encouragement to the children of light to walk in the light which reveals their needs, when we see how graciously hers were met, and how brightly shone those graces in her after-experience, the lack of which she here laments.

If our desires after spiritual blessings seem tardy in their fulfillment, we are not therefore to suppose that they are disregarded. Invisible is the process by which we receive them. They are not to be acquired and handled as are temporal gifts ; these we may obtain immediately, and rejoicingly show to our neighbor, that he may rejoice with us. Neither do they resemble the sudden life in a soul given to our prayers. They are deeper and more hidden, as the life hid with Christ in God, and only when

the tempest has swept over us, or the daily furnace has been entered, where none walked with us but the Son of God, have we realized that grace had really been granted us according to our prayers. Its reception must be the work of faith,—that of other gifts, more or less of sense.

Nothing is so dishonoring to God as unbelief. Even supposing that our prayer is not answered so that we can recognize it *here*, yet we have honored Him by asking for that which He alone can bestow ; and them that honor Him, He will honor.

Hinder not the holy life-giving Spirit. It is written, “If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.” And what does the longing soul desire, but conformity to *Him* without whom it can do nothing? We shall be satisfied when we awake in his likeness.

IV.

REQUESTS GRANTED.

"And Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, O that thou wouldest bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast, and that thine hand might be with me, and that thou wouldest keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me ! And God granted him that which he requested." — 1 CHRON. iv. 10.

IN January, 1856, Emily wrote to tell me that she had asked the Lord for a "Jubilee Year," and that already the answers were returning in blessings, through her tracts, and the conversion of two young women, in one of whom I was much interested. Also some evidence in the soul of her little son, giving her reason to believe that he was indeed a child of God.

Her own health was good, her husband's better, and many mercies were numbered up.

In her private diary was found, after her decease, the following entry, made on her birthday preceding :—

"Lord, forgive the sins of the past, and help me to be faithful in future. May this be a year of much blessing, a year of Jubilee ! May I be kept lowly, trusting, loving ! May I have more blessing than in all former years combined ! May I be

happier as a wife, mother, sister, writer, mistress, friend!"¹

And the Lord heard, and granted her that which she requested.

Merciful is the veil which conceals in what form our petition shall be granted; but we know the hand of love, once pierced for us, holdeth our souls in life and suffereth not our feet to be moved; although we find our prayers return to us in far other forms than we should have had courage to desire.

"Almost immediately," says her husband, "after the supplications above mentioned were recorded on high, the gracious answer began to be given. At first it came only in joy. The first-fruit was a very blessed revival of my own soul through some words which she spoke to me. And then there followed what she had reason to judge the sound conversion to God of three young persons within a few weeks, by the instrumentality of her conversations with them. Others were impressed, and appeared convinced of their sinful state. Moreover, before the year was completed, at least two instances were brought to her knowledge of gospel tracts having been blessed to the decided conversion of souls. And the grace of the Lord was displayed to her also, in causing these testimonies to the blood of Christ, the fruits of her pen, to be spread very

¹ This, and most of the following particulars, are extracted from *A Memorial of the Last Days of Emily Gesse*, by her husband.

widely, even to the most distant parts of the globe, the result of which will be fully known when the harvest of this sowing-time shall be gathered in.

“ During the twelvemonth between November, 1855, and November, 1856, seventeen of her gospel tracts were published by the Weekly Tract Society, in addition to fourteen of hers already in their catalogue ; and five more were printed between the latter date and her death, which have been published posthumously. This was besides many papers in various religious periodicals.

“ But the year of blessing, thus auspiciously begun, had scarcely half passed away before there appeared the messenger commissioned to take down her tabernacle, and consummate her joy, by removing her to the presence of her Lord.

“ Hitherto, we had known nothing but ease and happiness in the seven years of our married life, and it was not unfrequently remarked by us to each other, that the common lot, the badge of discipleship, seemed to be unknown to us. My beloved wife very frequently observed to me, and that especially during the year or two that preceded her mortal disease, ‘ How very happy we are ! surely this cannot last.’

“ It was soon to end. It is not for the eternal bliss of God’s children that their nest (Job xxix. 18) should be undisturbed ; and, therefore, He pulls it to pieces and says, ‘ Set your affection on things above.’ He cares for our eternal happiness, and

makes our temporal joy give place to the eternal.
‘Even so, Father.’”

Months elapsed ; we did not meet. I seldom heard from her ; she was not one to write for writing’s sake ; she was fully occupied ; yet I knew I was never forgotten, by the occasional packet of tracts and papers that received a grateful welcome in my sick-room, where I lived, God’s prisoner. He was teaching me Himself the things of the kingdom, for which He had already prepared me ; slow learner that I have been !

One morning I received a note from Emily, telling me of the shadow of that bright cloud which was destined to convey her beyond the reach of pain. The first tokens of cancer were visible to herself, and her apprehensions were confirmed by three of the faculty.

The simplicity and calmness of the detail were just what one would have expected from the trustful tenor of her life.

On the reverse of the note was written, “Is this the meaning of your vision after all ? Pray for H——.” Nothing for herself.

After the consultation with the surgeons, the worst was confirmed — which was the best. The chariot which was to convey her home from her labors to the eternal rest in the bosom of the Lord she loved was in motion. And all this she told her husband, when she returned, with her usual quiet smile, and with unbroken composure.

An American mode of treatment, but recently introduced into England, promised (how fallaciously we had yet to learn), if not a cure, at least a system in preference to immediate excision ; as in case of failure in the first instance, the cancer would be still in the same position for what appeared *then* the severer alternative of extraction.

At such a season, where could the sorely tried hearts go, but unto Him who has promised to be a refuge in the time of trouble ? And such they indeed found Him, her unselfish heart being more afflicted in her beloved husband's trial than in her own anticipated sufferings.

There are other souls similarly exercised, who will be comforted by the grace and strength given to this tried pair, to meet this sudden storm upon their hitherto pleasant homeward path.

"From the first certainty that we had of the nature of the disease," says Mr. Gosse, "we had earnestly and constantly sought wisdom from God, as to what measures we should take. We had been accustomed to act, according to the grace given to us, on that command, 'Be careful for nothing ; but in everything, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God.' (Phil. iv. 6.) We believed that the amplitude of that phrase, '*in everything*,' left nothing so small or so insignificant but that we might bring it and roll it on Him, the gracious burden-bearer ; and we had often proved the truth of the accompanying

promise, ‘The peace of God shall keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.’ There was also another promise on which we were accustomed to act: ‘If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.’ (James i. 5.)

“These commands and promises we unitedly pleaded before our Father, fully trusting that He would care for us according to his word—a word that cannot lie. We asked, in confidence that we should not be denied, that peace *would* keep our hearts and minds, and that wisdom *would* be given us. And let it not be thought inconsistent with this latter promise, that the result of our acting was different from what we desired and expected; not even if it could be shown that the treatment resorted to did really (as I believe was the case) aggravate my beloved’s sufferings, and hasten her death.

“It is true, this is not what we looked for; we asked to be guided with infallible wisdom, and we thought that the wisdom would be shown by leading us to choose the most effectual mode of cure.

“But God had not promised this: He had promised to give wisdom, and I must believe that He did give it; that the treatment we selected was the one which, in this particular case, He saw really best for us. He had his own end in view, and that was the removal of his beloved child to

his own presence in paradise, and the sustentation and comfort of survivors. And this was an end worthy of Himself ; so that I dare not say we were not wisely directed in taking the steps that led to it.

“The wisdom promised by God is a thing for faith to apprehend ; having asked unwaveringly, with *singleness of eye*, his guidance, I must believe I am guided : I must believe that my judgment, when I ultimately choose, is influenced — insensibly, indeed, but not less really — by his Spirit. And then results cannot affect this fact of Divine guidance. It is not the part of faith to say, if the result turn out according to my wish, ‘I was surely guided by heavenly wisdom ;’ but if otherwise, ‘I was left to myself.’ For God cannot belie himself, and He has nowhere promised to grant his children all that their foolish hearts would like, but what He judges best for their real welfare. He has promised wisdom, but not success.

“It was agreed on between us, that no treatment should be resorted to, unless we were both of the same mind concerning it. After much prayer, then, we were perfectly agreed that the American mode of treatment seemed to promise best. According to the sources of information open to us, it appeared to present comparative freedom from pain in the process, and a far greater probability of ultimate cure. With the knowledge we afterwards attained,

we should no doubt have decided far otherwise ; but it was not the Lord's will that we should decide differently, and therefore He saw fit to withhold from us that knowledge. He surely guided us, however, with infinite wisdom, to fulfill his purpose, which was infinitely good.¶

Many a keenly tempted heart this reasoning will tend to strengthen, for it rests on the faithfulness of Him in whom is no shadow of turning. Not that the quiet confidence of these united ones, trusting in the simple word of God, will of itself give comfort. Each one must draw for himself from that fountain whose every draught invigorates and soothes.

How often have I heard the remorseful grief of even Christian mourners over the failure of *means* used for the restoration of those of whom they were bereaved. "If we had but thought of this remedy, or heard of that skillful physician, or been enabled to take a journey to the South, or earlier detected the symptoms of disease, there is no doubt our lost one might have been spared to us for many years." O, doubting hearts ! This is not of faith, and is therefore sin. If you have sought for guidance, you must believe you were guided ; and although the result may be the sundering of earth's sweetest ties, and the painful process of purifying fires, which you have endured, take it as the wisest answer to your prayer. His thoughts are not our thoughts. His thoughts are the best.

"None liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself." The providence that lays, perhaps, the dearest and most promising of a family on the bed of languishing, often ordains the only preacher who could effectually reach some heart by that home hearth. Be sure of this, under no other circumstances could you learn the particular lesson it is come to teach you. Hasten to seek Him by whom it is sent, that you may not miss his deep, hidden message of love. Let not sorrow come there in teaching or warning in vain. Pray Him to sanctify it ; to enlighten your eyes, if you see it not nor trace his finger in the dispensation. Fear not ; it is a Father's hand, and for every new and changing phase in your sorrowful trial, He has a ready ear turned to listen, a ready hand to help. Shrink not from unfolding to Him the least perplexity that besets your path. Every trial, to its minutest part, has been ordered and arranged by Him ; his heart, more tender than that of the fondest mother, deems nothing beneath his notice that sends his child tearful and often speechless to his feet. Waste not your precious hours in seeking for creature help. Go where the fountain flows freely, where all love and might are waiting for you. Tell Jesus.

If thou dost call our loved ones home,
Shall we thy claims deny?
But, gracious Lord, now give us more
Of thy sweet company.

O, softly weep we for the dead,
Nor let our grief be loud !
So shall we hear his voice of love
Within the light-lined cloud.

They rest with Him, and shall our praise
Be silent while *they* sing ?
Nay, cloud, and rain, and biting blast
Sweet summer fruit shall bring.

Mourn we as they whose hope hath died,
With those his love bestowed ?
The message and the messenger
Were sent alike by God.

Shall we not gird us for the fight,
And, as we heavenward tread,
Remember, in the darkest hours,
What He, the Lord, hath said ?

V.

THROUGH SAMARIA.

"He must needs go through Samaria." — JOHN iv. 4.

IT was good for the Samaritans that Jesus was weary and faint with travel ; but for that link of the blessing He had not tarried two days in Samaria, where many knew Him as "indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world." Emily must needs go through a strange country, to testify of the love and faithfulness of Him who had said, "Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things which thou knowest not!"

The following May, the beloved sufferer was placed under the care of the American doctor for the purpose of undergoing the new treatment for the supposed cure of cancer, which had been suggested by an English physician as preferable to extraction.

And now began a season which was to ripen the grain for the garner, and try the faith of her life's companion in this tribulation. Emily had known little of sickness ; indeed, excepting an occasional headache, she told me she had had no experience of it worth mentioning ; yet her nervous system was so peculiarly sensitive, that the least discomfort

would unfit her for her ordinary avocations. This trial, then, which she was called on to undergo, in cutting her off from her pleasant labor of writing her gospel tracts, and from the quiet ministry of love around her, was the polishing of another facet in the jewel for the Saviour's crown.

The American doctor spoke with confidence of the case as one that promised a happy issue. When I saw her, and marked the vigor of her frame, and the bright hope in her face, I took hope also. Certain it was, that her affliction was blessed to all around her, and to none more than myself, in leading me to mark the finger of God, and to acknowledge his love in giving us our raiment of heaviness to weave into garments of beauty for his glory.

Emily's attendance on Dr. F—— involved the necessity of a wearisome journey from her house in Barnsbury to Pimlico, three times a week. On one of these days I accompanied her; it was a brilliant morning in June, when the earth is in all the first fresh beauty of summer. The air was scented with the mignonette and Brompton stocks, which filled some of the balconies in the West End squares. The sky had scarcely a city shadow to shroud its cloudless blue, and all looked fair without—a strange contrast to the woful waiting-room we entered; and sadder still, the exchange of the groups of blooming children who had passed us on their way to the parks and gardens, for the band of pale sufferers that soon crowded the chamber. One who knew

not God might have thought that on these poor sickly ones the curse of suffering humanity had specially fallen ; he would not see the love in affliction, wooing man to think of Him whose long-suffering waited still to bless. Among these poor stricken ones, Emily Gosse moved as a ministering angel.

Great was the fatigue she endured in these journeys to and fro, but she only dwelt on the opportunities they afforded her of telling to poor sinners the love of Jesus, or from time to time grasping the hand of some fellow-pilgrim by the way.

The omnibus and the waiting-room were alike her field of labor. That morning every one was very civil to us ; receiving her tracts and "Messengers" with courtesy, and many read them.

"But how do you know what to take with you ?" I asked, rather puzzled, as she sought amongst her papers for one and another, and as I marked the pause before each was offered. "How do you feel sure you give the right to the right person ?" She whispered the secret in my ear. Reader, shall I tell it you ?

"I ask Jesus!"

She then related to me the following incidents, afterwards recorded in her pocket-book in pencil, though I miss there other interesting encounters of which she told me at the same time.

"Sometimes my fellow-passengers are of an encouraging kind, and receive my tracts with pleasure;

sometimes, on the contrary, their very looks repel one's advances. A company of that sort I met lately, and yet things turned out better than I anticipated.

"I took out a paper of Mr. Drummond's, of Stirling, and after reading it myself awhile, I presented it to a doubtful-looking gentleman to my right, who looked as if he would have rejected a tract. By degrees, as others came in, I offered what I thought most likely to please them ; and as I saw some get out their spectacles, and others read without such aid, I got into conversation with my opposite neighbor, a Christian lady, who became quite interested in the Stirling enterprise, and promised to show the "British Messenger," etc., to some Christian friends in the country, whither she was going.

"Presently my attention was arrested by a poor little old man with an old blue bag, who had been reading. He had now taken off his horn spectacles, and put them in their paper case, and holding up a penny in his hand, he made a sign with his finger, as though he would cut it in half. When the noise of the wheels permitted, he made me understand that he wanted to know if I could give him a halfpenny if he gave me his penny. I shook my head, and signified I did not want his penny ; but this did not quite satisfy him ; the penny was put for a moment back in his pocket, but soon appeared again.

"The old man had evidently counted the cost,

and ventured his whole penny. I would much rather have given him one ; but I did not feel it right to refuse. It was like the widow's mite ; I felt it would bring a blessing with it — a blessing to himself and to others.

"I thought, 'If I buy eight tracts with that penny, they may be blessed to eight souls ; or even to eight hundred ! Shall I deprive this poor man of that honor ? Besides he will doubtless value the tracts I gave him all the more for having contributed to pay for sending tracts to others. Further, this little action will *lead me to pray for his soul*, which I should not otherwise have done.'

"As these thoughts passed through my mind, my opposite neighbor, who had seen what passed, took out her purse and offered me a shilling. Here was the first fruit of my old man's penny. I said to her, 'I did not give the tracts away with any expectation of payment.' She replied, 'I know that ; but of course there are expenses connected with giving them away : put that into your poor-box.'

"She would not have thought of it if the old man had not given his penny. Many have often received tracts and 'British Messengers,' and have never thought of helping to pay for sending forth more. Many could give a penny, if not a shilling ; perhaps many will who read this : and the old man may find in eternity, that his penny has produced fruit a hundred or a thousand fold."

Emily inquired if I had followed out a feeble ser-

vice I had begun ; and I replied that I found my motive was not pure in it, and so I gave it up.

"Don't do that," she answered ; "defeat Satan. Tell Jesus your design is not clearly *all* for his glory, and ask him to make it so — to purify your motive ; but do not give up the work. You know M — says, that 'if the Father sees one grain of love to his Son in the effort, it is the grain of gold in the sand ; He accepts it for Jesus' sake, and the blood is sprinkled on the rest.' " It was the same ever new song, "Tell Jesus."

That happy morning is still fresh in my memory. I had Emily to my heart's content all to myself, and we spoke uninterruptedly of what was dearest to both of us — of Jesus, and his dealings with his people.

A tedious case preceded our arrival, and we had long to wait. A young lady whom she expected to meet her there failed in her appointment, and this gave us the opportunity of a prolonged conversation. We both said, "It is good to be here."

When I remarked that it was the only unbroken interview that I had ever enjoyed with her, she smiled her bright arch smile, and immediately directed my attention to the young friend whom she had expected, and who was now entering the room.

Still I was so full of thankfulness for this happy hour of communion in our beloved Lord, that I did not murmur. Other patients soon followed, and my

interest was absorbed in watching Emily's gentle greetings to some she had met before, and to others — strangers — whose anxious or listless countenances she was scanning in deep sympathy. And again and again she recurred to the love of the Lord, in opening out to her these opportunities of serving Him, and that among souls she could not otherwise have reached.

"To each," writes Mr. Gosse, "she had a word of grace and kindness, undeterred by the scornful refusal of some, and the stolid indifference of others.

"Almost all who resorted to that room were co-sufferers with herself, or friends or relatives of such ; and her compassion was largely drawn out to them, impelling her to testify of Jesus' love to them, if they knew it not, and to seek mutually edifying and comforting communion with them, if they were already his. Not a few of those whom she met were real Christians ; some whose hearts became knit to hers in fervent love, passed before her into the presence of their Lord, going home only to die ; others, surviving, still speak in admiring praise of the sweet savor of Jesus' name, which was everywhere diffused by her. Her unselfish love led her to count her own sufferings light, if by means of them she could glorify her Lord.

"Nor were her sympathies confined to the spiritual need of her fellow-sufferers. Many of the patients were very poor, ill able to afford the expense of coming to and fro, of lodgings, of attend-

ance, and of the little comforts indispensable in sickness. 'These moved her loving pity. Her character was eminently practical ; she did not let her sympathy evaporate in sentimental speeches, but at once set about seeing what could be done."

"On one occasion," says a valued friend of Emily's, "I accompanied her to Dr. F——'s, and while waiting she spoke, as was her wont, to most of those seated round the room. She came at length to a poor man who appeared to be in a very suffering state, and asked him about his hope for eternity. He replied to the effect that 'he hoped he should do pretty well.' She walked a few paces from him, and then returning, solemnly said, 'There is but one way to be saved ; the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth from all sin.' She added a few more words ; but what affected and delighted me was, that in her fervor she no longer addressed that man in particular, but there she stood as God's witness, and in tones that all in that room might, and I believe did, hear (although perhaps herself unconscious of it), proclaimed the blessed tidings of salvation."

"If I wanted to recommend a patent," said Emily, observing how little testimony is usually given for Jesus, owing to the fear of man, "I should not at the first setting out force it ; but if I were travelling to make my master's patent known, be sure that in whatsoever society I was cast, I should let it be seen."

Certain I am, that when we are on our watch-tower, living close to Jesus, we have weapons more powerful than worldly wisdom can use. The Holy Spirit will breathe through our words, and prepare the way before us.

The gentle courtesy of the words and ways of one living in the light of Jesus' countenance is as different from the polished surface of mere worldly politeness, as are the beams of the setting sun to the rays of a gas lamp.

Only a trifling occasion may be granted us. A gnat has a very brief opportunity, but he makes the most of it, and insinuates one drop of poison with his sting, which leaves discomfort for days, and keeps him long in painful remembrance. A needle is a very little thing, but how much may be done with it by patient industry — strong garments for daily use, and delicate intricate workmanship, which the loom can but imitate! If an instrument be kept bright, and lie near the great Workman's hand, be sure it will be used ; and if not, it is well to show its willingness for service.

Many a weary hour might be wrought into blessing, in the waiting-rooms of some of our eminent physicians.

One who has found the shelter of the Rock against the storms that dash our earth-nests to the ground, must long to whisper of its sweet security to others. And where is there a sphere in which loving sympathy would often be more appreciated ?

The heart must be hardened indeed, before it can look unmoved upon the lines of pain and disease written on the anxious faces that throng these crowded rooms. Those whom the Lord may lead thither may find that, if they have returned themselves unhealed, they yet have been sent there to guide some soul to the fount of healing.

Many opportunities of showing the love of Christ to others will appear to those who really desire them ; and if we do not see them, the Lord can open our eyes to do so. If all else be denied, there is the prayer that carries these sick and apparently careless souls to that fountain, for whose healing waters they may be longing, while waiting for some man to help them.

Sick one whom Jesus loves, think what life-giving blessings you bear with you into this world's infirmary ! It is only a new furrow of the field to till for Jesus. Your prayer of faith may save the sick of worse than nature's leprosy ; and if you are cast there, remember Him.

You say, "I cannot speak to strangers."

It is a blessed thing for such poor lost sinners as the reader and the writer, that the Son of God does not thus answer us. He came to bind up the broken-hearted, to comfort the mourner, to heal the leper, to give sight to the blind, to make the lame walk, and the dumb to speak. He calls none "strangers" who come to Him.

It was well for the poor Samaritan adulteress that Jesus did not raise such objections.

Himself a stranger, weary with his journey, He even asked of one, with whom the Jews had no dealings, a cup of cold water at the well of Sychar.

He came in blessing, not only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, but to the Syrophœnician woman, whose daughter was healed through a mother's persevering prayer.

"Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you." It will be happy for those who say they know Him and labor for Him, not to hear at last from his lips, "I was a stranger, and ye took me not in."

My evil heart of unbelief at this time was often bringing me into darkness and desolation. Satan loves to weaken the hands for service, and close the lips for testimony, by summoning before us past transgressions which have been forever blotted out by the blood of Jesus.

Emily, with her sound views of gospel truth could not understand me here. It was better thus, as it eventually led me to confide in Him who knoweth our frame. Shattered in health, and easily broken in spirit, the great Adversary harassed my mind until I became bewildered and afraid, and could no longer discern through the mist of doubt that the covenant was ordered for me "*in all things, and sure.*"

We are promised that sin shall not have dominion over us; nevertheless, "the flesh lusteth against the Spirit," therefore the followers of the great Cap-

tain must be prepared for war. Up to the mercy-seat, ye whom Satan harasses with remembered failures! The promise of the Father is written there in the blood of the Lamb. It is pleaded by our great High Priest; it is revealed to your sinking heart by the Comforter. "Fear not, only believe."

At this time Emily wrote to me, "Do you believe that God has forgiven you the sins of to-day as well as the sins of your whole life? Then forgive yourself. A child never learns to-day's lessons better for fretting over the neglected task of yesterday." So I have found it.

Satan whispers only of the wrath of an offended God; the Comforter points to the Refuge. The great Adversary recounts our many and repeated sins; the Holy Spirit tells of the Lamb slain. Enter into the covert provided against the assaults of the "terrible one," and thus "be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might."

VI.

HEARTILY SERVING.

" Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men ; knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance : for ye serve the Lord Christ." — COL. iii. 23, 24.

DEAR Emily had indeed entered into the furnace. The vigor of her constitution, and the cheerfulness which seldom failed her, prevented all but those who watched her with the eye of affection from seeing the rapid inroads of disease upon her wasting frame.

Many of the applications of the American treatment were of the most painful nature, and these were continued without intermission, and persevered in until the end of August.

At that time, with the full consent of Dr. F—, the dear sufferer accompanied her husband to Tenby, on the coast of South Wales, where his professional engagements detained him until the following month, and this was the last of those happy travelling days in that sweet companionship of their wedded life, which had never been interrupted more than a few days since their union.

Before Emily left for Tenby, she requested me, in her absence, to remember her need of a servant.

I heard of an aged Christian seeking a Christian home for her granddaughter. She had been carefully trained as a useful servant, and I rejoiced in thinking that I had an open door for her, as well as in meeting the need of Mrs. Gosse. I wrote at once, but during some delay in the delivery of the letter, the girl was engaged. Emily writes thus :—

“It is very strange that the young girl should be engaged just as I inquired about her ; but that sort of thing has happened to me several times. The Lord knows best what servant I should have, and I desire to believe He will provide me with one — the right one.”

The large share of blessing she received in the conversion of her servants through her means, might encourage others to serve the Lord in this manner. Naturally it is more pleasant to a Christian family to receive a Christian servant. But with those who walk with God the question will always be, “What wouldst *thou* have me to do ?” and the result, though different from what may have been anticipated, will always bring peace. Thus again, the Christian servant, standing alone in a worldly family, if faithful to her heavenly Master, and not a mere eye-server, will shine as a living testimony for Him, if He has appointed her place of service.

How can we eat of the rich provisions of a Father’s table, without longing for those around us

to share in the costly blessing offered to all? The seamstress comes and goes, the tradespeople around partake of our custom, and yet, too often, nothing but a silent testimony is given, although the wise man has said: "A word spoken in due season, how good is it!"

One day when we were alone, Emily spoke to me of the inconsistency of wearing valuable ornaments; and while she did so, it was with some hesitation of manner, as if she shrank from paining me. She perceived that she had not made the least impression.

I said frankly, that I did not feel it wrong to do so. I did not wear or value them for their intrinsic worth, but for the associations connected with them. I had worn them for years; I should probably always wear them. And *then* I thought so.

She did not urge the point — perhaps she felt it was useless; but she said, in a tone of self-reproach, which I have never forgotten, "I should have waited for the Lord." It reminds me of one who was pressing some such point on another Christian, and was met by the question, "Who taught you that?" The would-be teacher replied, "The Lord." "Then," rejoined the other, "wait until the Lord teaches ME." And most wisely Emily waited. She never afterwards, by hint or suggestion, alluded to the subject, or if she did, I was not conscious of it.

Actions performed in deference to the wishes or

convictions of others are a vain oblation. The laying aside of gold, and pearls, and costly array, from such a motive, is of no more value in the sight of God, than the "Lord, Lord," of the foolish virgins. Outward conduct will manifest the inward life. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he."

I found myself one day by the sick-bed of a poor woman, where I little thought to receive the silent teaching of the Holy Spirit. "But the sun is no sooner *risen* with a burning heat, but it withereth the grass." As I knelt by her side, a gleam of sunlight, from the half-closed casement above us, fell on the ring I wore; but this was only a type of the beam of Love that fell upon my soul! My heart responded to that divine influence. The diamond flashed back the reflected ray. The sun-beam had its mission from Him who created and directed it.

The loving recollections which clustered around the costly gem were lost in the greater love of Him who laid down his life for his enemies.

When I left that dreary little room for my own chamber, it was to gather in a heap the trinkets, valuable to me as records of broken earthly ties, and lay them at the feet of my gracious Lord with tears of joy.

He accepted them. The gold and the silver *are* his, the beasts of the forest, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. He may use the hands of those who love Him not, when the hearts of those who

know Him are cold in his service. Valueless to Him is the sacrifice of formalism without the sweet constraint of love.

The soul may sometimes say, “ Will He have me adorn myself with his silver and gold? Will it make me fairer in *his* eyes? Do I seek to please man, or Jesus only? ”

It is the state and position of the *heart* towards God that has to be regarded ; for though you give all your goods to feed the poor, and give your body to be burned, and have not charity ; it profiteth nothing. (1 Cor. xiii. 3.)

I speak what I do know, when I declare that the delight of carrying such Egyptian spoils, with all their fond associations, to the feet of Jesus, must be tasted to be understood ; while the love which rejoices in his acceptance is sweeter to Him than all the rest — more precious than the fine gold !

Heed not whether the world may count your offering small or great. It is precious in the eyes of the Lord of the whole earth. As the tender parent smiles on the babe who totters to his knee with the gift of its first-gathered daisy, so the heavenly Father looks down on the feeblest expression of his children’s love.

These are landmarks on which the soul looks back, and then erects her Peniels, and presses on again, rejoicing that in heaven we have an enduring substance.

Follower of the Crucified, shall we not leave the

world's baubles and costly array *for* the worldling? They can have no worth in the sight of one who has seen the King in his beauty, and whose future home is with the Lord of glory!

As the agonizing applications were continued, Emily found this visit to the sea-side unlike all former ones, when the care of the body had so little obtruded on her notice. Nevertheless, she still found a service, and she has told me how much more she learnt, even in sympathy for others, in this new path in which the Lord of the harvest bade her sow.

On her return to London, after five months' vain endurance of torture to disperse the disease, the removal of the tumor was advised as the most hopeful course. The long journeys to and fro had now to be discontinued, and a lodging taken for her at Pimlico, near to the doctor's residence. Here she passed to another sphere of teaching and trial, accompanied by her little son, her companion and assiduous nurse.

Sleep, which up to the present time had not failed, now went from her, and it was seldom that she slumbered but for fitful seasons, and these disturbed by the moan that never escaped her patient lips, except when wrung from her in the extremity of anguish. Unable to find ease in any posture, she wandered up and down her chamber, resting her head from time to time upon the mantelpiece or against the wall.

O, truly this was a season to dwell on the eternal faithfulness of Him whose word is truth. Recollections of past blessings and prospects of future joys had little power to sustain ; it was the eternal "now ;" the present pain of almost every moment bearing up to the High Priest's censer the patient sigh, the glance of trust. The north wind of the Spirit was blowing over the beds of spices, and the myrrh and the aloes were as precious, nay, sweeter, doubtless, to the blessed Husbandman in this night season of proving, than the "camphire, with spike-nard, calamus, and cinnamon, with all trees of frankincense," yielded in the sunshine of her life's morning.

No cloud obscured her faith or shook her trust ; she rested on the Rock, "a sign," — a child, believing in the immutable word of a loving Father and faithful God !

In resigning the joy of her spirit, it seemed as if *that*, having ripened, was "*laid up*" for her : the new wine awaited her in her Father's house ; she could afford to put by the spiced wine now, and drink the myrrh in deeper fellowship with Jesus.

If the intensity of her suffering abated, it was all that could be said of the most quiet hour ; never was she wholly free again from its agony, until she put off her heavy robe of earth, for the garment of praise and the girdle of gladness, in the light of the land of the Lamb.

Again she had to undergo the agonizing applica-

tion, and she resigned herself to the new torture in calm submission to her Father's will ; nor during the protracted season of every new experience of suffering did one word of murmuring escape her, nor by expression or look was intimated a doubt of the loving-kindness of her Lord. She delighted to dwell on his goodness, and this was often manifest to her, because of her quick understanding in the fear of the Lord, when others, less instructed in God's school, might have failed to trace it. " How merciful it is of the Lord, that " — was so frequent a commencement of her sentences as to be recognized as quite characteristic by those who were intimate with her.

Once when I visited her at Pimlico, I took with me some grapes, almost as much for their rare beauty, as the delight of carrying her anything to refresh her fevered appetite. When I reached her lodgings, I found her heated and excited from an injudicious visitor, who was indulging in controversial argument, to the distress of the dear sufferer.

And here I would say a word to those who visit the sick-room, either from solely benevolent motives, or otherwise designing spiritual benefit to those they visit. Do not forget that it is not simply a room shut out from the external life from which you come ; but also, if not of actual suffering, yet often of exhaustion consequent on pain. Few are fitted to minister to the sick, whether it be the body's ailment or soul-sickness. Those who have lived much in

such an atmosphere can tell how the shattered frame and exhausted nerves tremble beneath the bustling entrance, and loud voice, and controversial conversation ; and how the long-protracted visit, that has no particular aim or object, robs the poor sufferer of the hour's rest or comfort which the visitor has no power to impart. There is one way to be blessed, and to be made a blessing. Waiting on Jesus, you may carry refreshment with you, and receive in return some new lesson of love, learned in the shadow of that cloud which you have never under the same circumstances entered ; but it is a special ministry. "*I was sick and ye visited me!*" This kept in remembrance will leave a blessing on the giver and on the receiver.

The Lord moved her unpropitious visitor to depart, and the weary, flushed face of the invalid sank back, restored to its peaceful aspect as the pressure on her spirit was removed.

I enjoyed speaking with her on the Lord's love in angelic ministry, and scarcely ever did we do so, but she alluded to or repeated her favorite hymn : —

“ Thy minist'ring spirits descend
To watch while thy saints are asleep ;
By day and by night they attend,
The heirs of salvation to keep ;
Bright seraphs, dispatched from the throne,
Repair to the stations assigned,
And angels elect are sent down
To guard the elect of mankind.

“ Their worship no interval knows,
Their fervor is still on the wing,
And while they protect my repose,
They chant to the praise of my King.
I, too, at the season ordained,
Their chorus forever shall join,
And love and adore without end
Their faithful Creator — and mine.”

As I bathed her heated hands, and arranged her pillows this afternoon, she said, “ I have been thinking much, particularly in the night, of the ministry of angels : I am sure the angels brought you to me at the moment I most needed you.”

Then I traced with her the chain of circumstances that had not only led me to London, but within a street or two of her lodgings, which I knew not until I set out to visit her, never having been there before. She exclaimed, —

“ How good the Lord was to send you, just when He did ! The Lord will reward you.”

I was silent. She smiled and added, “ O, I forgot ; you will not be rewarded ; I must remember your theory, that when we have pleasure in doing anything for Jesus, we have our reward here, and are not to expect any other in heaven. I think some of us will be surprised when we get home, to find what the Lord saw fitted for reward, and how much was sin.”

A plate of grapes was on the table ; this was a disappointment to me, and I told her so, having thought to bring her what perhaps she desired.

Great I know was my delight to find that the fruit was uneatable, and that she had set it aside. Those who have few opportunities of thus helping the sick ones will share my pleasure, when I opened the basket and showed her the white water grapes nestling in their bed of fresh green leaves. And then I had the joy of seeing also the Lord's tenderness, in allowing me to experience how such a trifling thing done for Him could be blessed. She held the last grape in her attenuated fingers, and paused ; her countenance was sweetly solemn, and her eyes were closed. It was something like the deep peace of her visioned face.

At last she spoke. "I have been asking Jesus *never* to let you want grapes in your sickness ; and," she added emphatically, "*He never will.*"

And here I witness to the acceptance of Emily's loving prayer. Through long and wearisome illnesses, and they have been many, I have never lacked any good thing, and above all, the tender love of my heavenly Father has supplied me wonderfully with this refreshing fruit, and gladdened my heart by enabling me to serve others from his abundant store. Fit living emblem of Jesus, full of holy associations, bringing, in many a long night-watch, thoughts of the past, invigorating to my soul ; none the least the recollection of that day's fervent prayer.

An endless record is the loving-kindness of my beloved Lord to me. Each cluster of grapes since

that day has had its history ; with every one comes the same sweet message that was whispered to my heart, in the dawn of that morning, so soon to shine in the glory of the Lord on my soul : "Inasmuch as you have done it unto *her*, you have done it unto me !"

If any hope of Emily's partial restoration had been indulged in, it was now swept away. The terrible torture to which her exhausted frame had been subjected, was of no avail, as far as any curative effect was concerned ; the American doctor at last pronouncing that the disease was in the blood. This might have been manifested in the first instance, and much of the subsequent agony have been spared. But it was the Lord's will that it should not be so, and that this furnace of peculiar character should be used in the purification of one whom He intended to honor.

Again this sorely-tried pair sought the great Counselor, and found, as all must who seek Him in simplicity and truth, peace, "perfect peace," because they trusted in Him.

Both felt that an entire change of treatment was necessary, and that without delay.

Emily had a strong predilection in favor of homœopathy ; she had always been its firm advocate, and her husband's mind inclining toward it, they decided upon a homœopathic course of treatment.

When I next saw her, I told her I rejoiced in the decision, and that I had greatly longed for her to try it the whole time she was at Pimlico.

"And why, then, did you never urge it?" she inquired.

I explained to her how each time I tried to do so, I was withheld by the dread of interfering with a treatment they had both earnestly sought in prayer, and by a fear of in any way unsettling her mind.

This seemed to her confirmatory that the mixing of this loving cup was all of Him whose name is love, and that not one bitter drop in the draught, or one blessing in its reception, could have been spared. "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." (Rom. viii. 18.)

She was at once removed from Pimlico to the comfort of her own home at Barnsbury, and keenly realized the pleasant change from their lodgings, which had been primarily sought from their being nearer Dr. ——.

Every day brought fresh occasion of thanksgiving for this last step of dependence on the Lord.

During this time of pain and weakness, she saw through the press three of her last tracts, "A Home Welcome," "The Two Hospital Patients," and "The Dying Postman," written during her stay at Pimlico.

Her service was changing, but it was the same Master who was rapidly moving her from one

section to another of his school, in each of which she learnt something of Him she could have learnt under no other dispensation. She wrote no more.

No exalted joys brightened her way ; scarcely was it possible for that sorely suffering frame to respond to gladness. Neither was there one desponding sigh, one murmur to ruffle a peace that anchored in the word of a covenant God.

Her nerves were shattered by unceasing pain, and the enfeebled body worn by sleeplessness and the semi-recumbent position which she was obliged to maintain. The powerful remedies, used to combat the disease and produce sleep, had acted on the susceptible nervous temperament, so that the once strong brain and vigorous thought could no longer be concentrated upon a subject, and many days she could look no farther than to the cessation of the present paroxysm of pain to the hope of relief. Her trust in the faithfulness of Him, with whom she had walked in the cheerful and unclouded noonday, was her trust still, in the thorny path, with the shadows of night lengthening round her.

A few verses at most from that Book which had been her life's treasure were as much as she could bear. A beautiful hymn of Toplady's was her favorite throughout her illness ; she was never weary of hearing it : —

“ Kind Author and ground of my hope,
Thee — thee for my God I avow ;

My glad Ebenezer set up,
And own thou hast helped me till now.
I muse on the years that are passed,
Wherein my defense thou hast proved,
Nor wilt thou relinquish at last
A sinner so signally loved."

And this last line she often dwelt on with peculiar delight.

The beloved companion of her labors of love, who shared with her in seeking out of the Book of the Lord and reading therein, had now become the tender nurse of her sick-chamber ; and, to add to many blessings, a relative left her own family unsolicited, to go to them and help at a time when such sisterly love was the immediate answer to prayer.

It may be a mystery to some why these things should be ; that one so devoted to her Master's service should be called to lay down the work so dear to her heart. We cannot trace the dealings of the Lord with his people by the light of nature, nor hear his voice in the storm that beats around our own path, with the natural ear. "We walk by faith, not by sight."

Some deeper lesson to be learned, some secret thing of God to be revealed, some hitherto unknown manifestation of the Comforter, is often reserved for the sanctuary of the sick-chamber.

Suffering is still a service, not only before Christ and the unseen world, but also for that multitude

among whom the sufferer can no longer visibly minister.

There are lone watches in the night, when Jesus and the soul have deep communings; and as the hours pass of the day that calls others to its labor, the Lord is gathering from many a secluded priest the prayer that shall fall in blessings on the seed scattered in his Name.

Nor was the sick-room of Emily Gosse without its ministry. When unable longer to write, the packets of tracts and papers that went forth under her direction became messages of love,—more deeply valued from the very circumstance of her remembrance amid her own severe sufferings.

“She possessed,” observes her husband, “a remarkable power of obtaining the confidence of strangers. It was quite a common occurrence for a travelling companion to open up to her the history of a life, and this though she was by no means communicative of her own private affairs. Often has she come home and told me a story full of romantic passages, which had been confided to her by some forlorn woman, whom she had met laden with trouble. I believe it was owing to her great power of sympathy, which was quick to read trouble and sorrow in another’s countenance, and which then, by some gentle word of inquiry or condolence, opened the springs of grief, so that it flowed forth.

“And then she was a willing and attentive listener, and a wise and judicious counselor; and

while she did not fail to manifest her interest in the temporal sorrows thus confided to her, she always sought to make the conversation an occasion for introducing higher topics. It was one prominent feature of her character, that she was always on the watch for occasions of speaking a word for Jesus.

"If her companion was a believer, she would try to excite a more potent faith (if that was lacking) in the wisdom and love of God; and specially she loved to lead up the thoughts to Jesus, as the Great High Priest, and the unfailing Advocate; but if, as was commonly the case, such themes elicited no response, or only that vague assent which tells that the hearer has no interest in them, then she would ingeniously, and without obtrusiveness, speak of the need of being prepared for eternity, of the mode in which such a preparation was to be obtained, and of the cleansing blood of Christ. If there was one Gospel text which more than any other she delighted to quote in such conversation, it was this: 'The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from all sin.'" (1 John i. 7.)

She was very slow to judge others, but very swift in judging herself; and that even in offices of benevolence. She said, "Unless we are doing the Lord's will, even in relieving others, we may be interfering with his work. It was great pain to me to deny myself in regard to E—— yesterday; but I had asked Jesus. It would have been easier to the

flesh to give, but it was not his will, and I withheld the money."

I confessed to her that I had given, and had not asked counsel of the Lord. A year after her decease I was allowed to *see* that I had walked by sense and natural benevolence; Emily in the power of the faith of the new man.

We were speaking of the busy workers and benevolent people who care nothing for the Lord Himself.

I had found it difficult then to realize that those who showed kindness to the Lord's people, and assisted in work for his purposes, could be wholly unapproved of Him. So slow was I to recognize the utterly lost state of the natural man. I had not seen then, that the cup of cold water, given to his least disciple, must be given *for the sake of Jesus*, to be accepted.

Emily's remark was, "They are like Noah's carpenters;" and turning to her husband, she said, smiling,—

"Henry, you illustrate it."

Mr. Gosse kindly put down his book, and replied readily:—

"Suppose I have a son who is at enmity with me, and refuses to be reconciled. He will not live with me, he has a house next door, he is content to dwell in it, and never see my face. I am rearing some caterpillars in my garden, to which I attach value; my son amuses himself by leaning over the wall to

feed my caterpillars, which I can do without him ; shall I owe him gratitude, that he amuses himself, while he refuses to be reconciled to me ? ”

One who had lived in sweet fellowship with her eighteen years before I was blessed in knowing her, thus writes : —

“ I can truly say, that almost every recollection of my much beloved friend is fragrant with the name of Jesus. She lived to serve and glorify Him ; it was the one object of her life. I do not think I ever met with a person so single-eyed, or so consistent as a Christian ; it was to me a continual memento of what we ought to be. Prayer was her strength ; she took everything to Jesus ; -things pleasant or sad, perplexing or comforting, alike were imparted into his ever-open ear. O, how often have we knelt together, and she has taught me to seek for grace for others as well as myself, at a throne of grace ! She used to say, ‘ We can never speak against any one we have prayed for ; ’ and ‘ Let us ask the Lord,’ was her continual invitation. Her prayers were most simple and fervent, literally those of a loving child, in the greatest simplicity telling her Father everything, and owning his hand in everything. She used to say nothing was too minute for Him to care for ; and if she intended to go one way, and her plans were quite defeated, she could rejoice in the conviction that He was guiding her path, and this was happiness. She had great sympathy for those in trial, and sought by prayer to

help them when in no other way she could. Though extremely cheerful, her heart responded instantly to the plea of sorrow, and by personal sympathy and prayer she made the trials of others her own.

"She was a most devoted daughter and sister. She told me her mother was a peculiarly clever woman, and that they were chiefly indebted to her for their love of knowledge. She taught them the classics, and Emily herself was quite a scholar. Latin and Greek she was familiar with ; I feel uncertain about Hebrew. She was fond of teaching, and for some years, I know, she maintained her brother at the university by her disinterested appropriation of her income to this object. They were a most united family.

"Amongst the many precious reminiscences of our friendship, few things strike me more forcibly than what I would call her 'family love.' No matter whether rich or poor, learned or unlearned, agreeable or disagreeable, if she discovered in them the lineaments of her blessed Saviour, she was irresistibly attracted to them, and sought in every way to get good, or to do good.

"Her self-denying efforts were unwearied in cases of emergency or distress, and no amount of disappointment or personal discomfort would change her purpose. Sometimes, when surprise has been expressed that she was not discouraged, she would say, 'We are all clay in the hands of the great Potter. He knows how to accomplish his purpose

of making us vessels of honor ; and, as I must meet them in the glory and admire them then, I had better begin now to try what there is to like.' Thus would she check a detracting spirit in others, by her example as well as her words, and lead the thoughts of her companions to that coming day, when Jesus Christ will own every instance of such service as done to Himself.

"I have often thought the 'inasmuch' richly belonged to her. Do you remember her happy cheerfulness which made her such a bright home companion — never gloomy, always buoyant for the occasion ?

"Those who knew her best loved her most, and were sure of her sympathy for joy or sorrow. Yet it is only right to state, lest some who slightly knew her should consider her character overdrawn, that a certain *brusquerie* of manner, and a want of completeness in the minor etiquette of society, often did great injustice to the real refinement of heart and mind which she eminently possessed.

"After her marriage I saw much less of her ; but still learnt by her example the value of God's Word, its practical power to meet every circumstance of life. It was a great change to one who had been always at liberty to visit and care for others, to fulfill literally the Apostle's injunction to be a 'keeper at home,' to 'submit herself to her husband as to the Lord ;' but she owned the duty as imparted from on high, and sought for the needed grace to

‘adorn the doctrine.’ She daily sought to ‘reverence her husband,’ and to merge all her tastes and wishes in his, so that she truly became a meet helper to him, and they walked together ‘as heirs of the grace of life.’ She greatly dreaded anything that should ‘hinder their prayers ;’ for union in Jesus was her aim in everything. Her sphere of service from this time was changed ; but still how useful ! What she did will only be known when the secrets of all hearts will be revealed : her tracts prove much. I believe few, if any, knew that they (Mr. G. and herself) mainly supported a missionary to the poor, and she herself told me that most of the striking anecdotes related in her tracts came under their notice through his visitations ; others occurred to herself, and all were true. Dear Emily ! I love to think of her, and owe much, very much to her ; for our most intimate intercourse was ever at the mercy-seat. The last time she was here seems but a few weeks since, so vividly is it before my mental eye. She had been to consult a physician, and told me, for the first time, what were her own fears and his confirmation. O, how rapidly from that day she faded ! it is difficult not to repeat, whenever I think of her, ‘Let me not fall into the hands of man, but into the hands of God.’ It was a fiery ordeal she endured during her last weeks on earth ; but never can I forget her patience, submission, and peace ; truly she realized the promise of ‘perfect peace’ to them who wait upon Him. I only saw her three or

four times ; she seemed cut down in the vigor of life ; but doubtless her work was done. I can always feel as regards her, how truly ‘ blessed are the dead that die in the Lord ; they rest from their labors, and their works do follow them.’ ”

VII.

THE VISION REALIZED.

"And the glory of the Lord came into the house by the way of the gate whose prospect is toward the east." — EZEK. xliii. 4.

"**G**OD will not lay on you one stroke more than you are able to bear," said a visitor to a dear child of the Father, whom she was glorifying in the fire of sickness and trial.

She replied, "I do not feel as if God were *beating* me. He was not *angry* when he allowed the Israelitish youths to be cast into the fiery furnace."

The bonds and imprisonment of Paul were no marks of displeasure from the Lord. The "chosen vessel" was honored by suffering great things for the name of Him he went forth to preach. Paul and Silas were not cast into prison for their own sins, but for the salvation of the jailer of Philippi. And surely, when Peter was a solitary prisoner, and prayer moved the hinge of the iron gate, he did not look back to the day when he was delivered into the hands of four quaternions of soldiers, as if it had been a punishment for sin !

The Good Shepherd's rod, guiding Emily into places and positions in which she might learn this wilderness experience, which could not be learnt in

her home of light, was the only rod that *she* recognized. God is love ; therefore, all that his children expect is love, and all they receive from Him is love.

If a loving father, conscious of the undeveloped powers of his son, gives him what appears to the ignorant a cruel task to study, it is not so to the son — he has learned enough to be sure that such teaching is needful for the future career for which his father designs him. For its acquisition, he must necessarily forego many a mountain ramble and many a twilight wandering ; yet he knows no good thing has his father withheld from him, and that problem to be solved, and this language to be learned in a strange land, are among the *all* things that work together for his good.

To have sunk under painless disease, in an atmosphere of praise and joy, would have had little teaching in comparison to this solemn season of almost unmitigated suffering.

At the words of the Lord, Emily had thankfully walked in the sunshiny paths, telling of Him, whom to follow was her whole life's glad service ; and now, when He laid her low — how low ! — and put into her hand the cup mingled with myrrh, in place of the new wine, it was well also.

In one of the only two interviews I had with her after her return home, Emily told me that she hoped, if her life should be prolonged, she should soon be accustomed to her sick-room, and her body

would not require so much of her care. "Then," she added, — "then my chamber will be a little Bethel."

While alluding to her sufferings, she said, "I am being pruned and purged ; *you* will not think I am making much of myself when I say, that it is that I may bring forth *more* fruit."

While I was writing this, I received a letter from a dear friend ; its last page is full of the subject that was filling my heart as I recalled the precious dealing of a Father's loving hand. I give it without marring it by comments of my own, believing that it has its message to some waiting soul — now willing to wait and suffer, where once it loved to labor : —

"We may well be content to be nothing, if only *God* be glorified. I have lately been led to look on affliction as the purging process which is necessary for the branch ere it can bring forth fruit. There must first be *fruit* to characterize the branch as a living one on the true vine ; then the purging comes, and, as a result, *more* fruit ; but it is the secret abiding in Him, the close, holy fellowship with Jesus, which produces *much* fruit ; and perhaps it is oftenest in affliction that we get into this holy fellowship. When the world is dark around us, then we have only *his* light to walk in ; for the walking in the light and having fellowship are so closely connected. And what is the fruit? Might we not be tempted oftentimes to think — much zeal, activity, and vigor,

in our Master's service ; much talking to others, and preaching, teaching, and running about. But what is our Master's estimate of fruit? What in his sight is a fruit-bearing branch? "Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." (Gal. v. 22, 23.) Are we not often tempted to call things by wrong names, and to take our own standard of things and bring it to God's Word, rather than to take God's standard and put aside our own? Dear, dear sister, we shall understand by and by *all* — all our Father's dealings with us, and *then* we shall indeed rejoice."

Before I left her, Emily asked me to repeat my golden dream once more.

And this time her eyes filled with tears, and my own voice was broken. I knew not, though my own heart seemed to whisper, that when I next saw that pale, emaciated form, she would be clad in her marriage robe, and, all fresh and lovely as in my heavenly vision, would stand in the presence of the King in his beauty.

She told me of the sympathy for the poor and lonely that her lodgings had taught her, though it always seemed to me that she never lacked sympathy for any form of distress or suffering.

"How tenderly," she said, "we should think of the sick : the disorder of the sick-room, instead of exciting blame or disgust, should call forth our pity ; perhaps, if they have any one to care for them, even *they* may have many claims upon them, and this I have learnt, with other things, here."

Consumption was now evident, and a second physician pronounced that either of the diseases then present might be the immediate cause of death. No hope of recovery was held forth; but no probability of a speedy decease was anticipated.

Under the homœopathic treatment there was a manifest improvement, and it is sweet to see the tender love of the Great Physician leading these waiting ones to such means as should now soothe in some measure the shattered nerves, and alleviate the worst of her sufferings.

As far as could be ascertained, the progress of the second cancer was but temporarily arrested; the restlessness caused by the medicine and depression disappeared. Her cough, however, still visited her in continued paroxysms, shaking her worn frame, and depriving her of rest. It was seldom that she obtained more than half an hour's sleep.

"It had become evident to us both," observes Mr. Gosse, "that the severance of that happy union, which, without a single interruption of its peace and love, had been vouchsafed to us for the last eight years, was an event not very far from us. We looked it in the face; we well knew no blessing, no strength, was to be gained by concealing it from ourselves or from each other, and we talked of it freely. To me the prospect was dark indeed; but to her death had no terrors. Our dear child she was able to leave in the hands of that loving Lord

for whom she had trained him from earliest infancy, and to whose tender care she now in the confidence of faith committed him ; but her loving heart deeply tasted the bitterness of the cup which she saw I should soon have to drink. It was but a day or two before her departure that she said to me, with a look of unutterable affection, and with peculiar emphasis, dwelling on each precious word, now embalmed in my inmost heart, ‘I love you — better than on my wedding-day — better than when I was taken ill — better than when I came home from Pimlico.’

“ At another time she said, ‘ My beloved Henry, gladly would I remain, if such were the Lord’s will, and be your companion for the rest of your pilgrimage ! ’

“ Nor was this the language of mere natural affection, however tender or refined ; it was evoked by that which in her was ever the master principle, an earnest longing after the spiritual welfare of those whom she loved. She was not ignorant — she could not be — how often the Lord had used her unworldly faith, her unselfish love, her saintly devotion, her wise and godly counsel, to the promotion of my best interests, checking and counteracting the earthly tendencies of my heart, and its proneness to love this present world. The faith that could leave her child to the care of her covenant God, could with difficulty leave her husband to the same care.

"Another proof of the faithfulness of God in hearing prayer, was the mitigation of actual pain as the closing scene drew near. Knowing as we did in what terrible agony this disease often ends, . . . : our eyes were lifted up to the Lord, that He would spare his child the depth of this affliction." And He graciously did, although power was almost lost on one side, and her breathing increasingly oppressed.

Amidst the varied sufferings or discomforts which tried her wasted frame, "her quiet, patient submission to the will of God never failed. Throughout her illness," continues Mr. Gosse, "I never heard an approach to a murmur."

"A week or two before her departure, the course of reading in family worship brought us to John xiii. I had made a few remarks on the grace of the Lord in purging his own from defilement, and on the various modes in which He effects it ; and turning to her, I said, 'Jesus is washing your feet now, love.'

"This little observation was used to her great comfort and refreshment ; and she repeatedly told me afterwards, that thenceforth it became one of her favorite words until the last,—'Jesus is washing my feet !'

"The anticipation of being soon in the presence of the Lord who had redeemed her was delightful to her. To a friend, who called a few days before her departure, she said, 'This will be the happiest year of my life, for I shall see Jesus.'

"At another time she said, 'I do not desire to die. I am ready to go if the Lord so chooses, but I am willing to live longer for your sake.' I have already explained, that living for my sake was in her mind only a phrase for laboring for the Lord.

"I said, 'Is Jesus precious to you?' She knew I meant *consciously, joyously* precious.

"She replied, 'I cannot say that; I have not the joys I expected; *I rest* upon his word, his inspiration.'

"It had been a favorite thought of hers, that the saints of God are in their last moments often favored with sights and sounds that belong to the world they are approaching.

"In some descriptions of happy death-beds such are not unfrequently spoken of. I think that they rested a good deal on her mind, and that she in some measure hoped they would be vouchsafed to herself. But may I not affirm that God gave her a better thing? For surely it was a nobler testimony that she could calmly face death, 'resting on his word, his inspiration,' than any that she might have given respecting the most rapturous sensible manifestations. Like the old worthies 'witnessed unto' by the Holy Ghost, she 'died in faith.'

"I have since thought that the Lord intended her a special honor in thus calling her to go out of the world without any sensible joy, resting on his word alone.

“ If there was one principle that, more than all besides, she had insisted on in her Gospel tracts, it was this,— That it is the part of faith not to seek for evidence from feelings, fruits, or anything within, but simply to take the naked Word of God.”

“ This is strongly brought out by her in her tracts — ‘John Clarke,’ ‘John Clarke’s Wife,’ ‘The Old Soldier’s Widow,’ etc.

“ She had strongly taught, that in the matter of salvation, God’s simple ‘yea’ and ‘amen’ is a rock stable enough to stand on, without any support besides. He chose that she should give a dying testimony to the same truth ; that *she* should herself be the testimony ; that she should herself be content to pass into eternity, with no other support than the word of ‘the unlying God.’”

Nor was hers a singular case. Many who have walked in the full light of God’s smile, witnessing for Him through a life-time devoted to his service, and in sweet communion with the heavenly Three in One, have, during the last scene, by the absence of all joyous feelings, been called to a yet deeper experience than they have ever known of simple faith and trust in the word and promise of that living God, whom, *not seeing*, they still love. We all can testify, who have walked in the light, that to bask on the mountain-top, in the sensible presence of Jesus, may well enable us to breast the stormy billows ; but to believe that He is with us, though we cannot see his face ; to know that he is our own

Jesus, the same in the darkest valley as on the Mount of Transfiguration, is a far higher exercise of faith. The day's testimony has proclaimed, "I am his, and He is mine," and the setting life sinks peacefully to rest on, "*I know whom I have believed.*"

"On Saturday, the 7th of February," again observes her husband, "it became evident that the parting scene could not be delayed ; she gave me her dying counsels, expressed her wishes concerning our child, dictated a long catalogue of friends to whom the fact of her death was to be communicated, and set her house in order.

"In solemnly reviewing the history of our married life, she spoke of the principles by which she had striven to walk, and ended with the following words : 'I feel that, be it much or little, I have finished my course. I have loved the Lord and his work ; and my only thought, if He were to give me another twelvemonth of life, would be, that I might labor a little more for Him.'

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"Her last day on earth was now come. It was one of brilliant sunshine,—a lovely day for mid-winter. We had moved her to her couch towards the window, and as the bright sunlight streamed upon her countenance, we little thought she would see that sun no more. As she lay still, she said, 'I shall see his bright face, and shall shine in his

brightness, and shall sing his praise in strains never uttered below.'

As night drew on, a change became manifest. Soon after eight o'clock she experienced a partial paralysis of the tongue, so that speech was scarcely intelligible. In allusion to this, and dreading that she might linger some time without the power of speech, she said, 'The Lord has hitherto raised me up above circumstances ; He has made me to ride upon the high places of the earth, and now He has brought me down, and now He has made me to fear.'

"Fear what, my darling ?" I asked.

"Paralysis."

Presently she said, "Tis a pleasant way — more pleasant than when I could not pray for what would make you unhappy." I suppose she referred to the circumstance, that within the last day or two I had been able solemnly to resign her into the hands of Him who, for a season, had lent her to me, and who now reclaimed his loan.

She looked on us hanging over her, and said, as if the thought of eternal union were delightful to her, 'One family, one song !'

At times she fell into momentary slumbers, and though her speech was not altogether intelligible, yet it was ever of Him whose 'best wine for his beloved goeth down sweetly, causing the lips of those that are asleep to speak.' In one of these

murmurings I made out the words, ‘Open the gates — open the gates, and let me in.’ Ah! the blessed of the Lord had not much longer to ‘stand without.’

“I spoke to her of the freeness of gospel grace, which she had proclaimed so fully ; she replied,—

“‘I see it.’

“‘See what, love?’ I asked.

“‘I see the freeness of gospel grace that I have set before others, but in extreme weakness ;’ immediately adding, lest the expression should be misunderstood as meaning dimness of apprehension of the truth, ‘In extreme weakness *of body*:’

“She murmured, ‘I am going home ; I must go home.’

“‘Yes,’ I replied, ‘what a blessing that you have a home to go to !’

“She immediately added, almost inarticulately, ‘And a hearty welcome.’ This was in allusion to one of her last tracts, which in MS. had been entitled, ‘A Home and a Hearty Welcome.’

“After a while our precious sufferer said, ‘I shall walk with Him in white ; won’t you take your lamb and walk with me ?’

“This she repeated twice or thrice, as she saw I did not readily catch her meaning. I believe, however, she alluded to our dear child.”

Her eyes, now dim with the shadow of death, turned upon her husband, who was hanging over her, and addressing him by the old endearing name, she said, “Dear papa, I’m all ready.”

"What has made you ready?" he inquired.

"The blood!" Then she added, '*The blood of the Lamb.*'

"This precious testimony was the last sentence that issued from her lips. It had been her joy in life to proclaim the sufficiency of that blood, and now she died on it."

She noticed nothing more, and exactly as the hour proclaimed a new day dawning, a brighter one broke upon her vision. One long-drawn sigh, and the happy spirit had entered the gate. Then, kneeling round, the watchers of that bed of suffering gave thanks, amid sobs and tears, for her peaceful admission into her happy home.

Abney Park Cemetery was chosen as the place for the deposit of her dust, there to rest until the approaching manifestation of the sons of God. Then she shall rise to meet her Lord, renewed in resurrection power and beauty, changed into his likeness whose glory was precious to her soul.

On Friday, the 13th of February, 1857, "they took up the body and buried it, and went and told JESUS."

A plain stone, under the shadow of a lofty elm, bears the following words: —

THE DUST OF
EMILY GOSSE,
WHO SLEPT IN JESUS
Feb. 9th, 1857.
WAITS HERE THE MORNING
OF THE
FIRST RESURRECTION.

How can I close these pages, that may fall beneath the eye of the careless, the scoffer, the unsaved? I am humbled to think how my own soul has been fed with those words which to them must be a strange speech.

This Friend, this Elder Brother of his Father's redeemed family, is the Friend of sinners. Sinner, He has *died* for you. Behold his hands and his feet. But you are blind and cannot see Him; you cannot trace Him in his providence, nor adore Him in his work. Neither has affliction its blessings, nor is death the herald of the King of Peace to you.

O! will you not come to Him, that you may receive your sight? To-day, even to-day, the Son of God is passing by. It is the Good Physician, Jesus of Nazareth. He saith unto you, "What wouldest thou that I should do unto thee?" O! TELL JESUS.

THE LOVING CUP.

"The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?"—JOHN xviii. 11.

Come, drink ye, drink ye all of it,
Pale children of a King;
No poison mingles in the draught,
So, while ye suffer, sing.
'Tis Love's own life hath won it us,
Christ's lip hath pressed the brim:
Come, drink ye, drink ye all of it,
In fellowship with Him!

O ! shun not thou the Loving Cup,
 Nor tremble at its hue ;
 There is no bitter in the bowl,
 But Jesus drank it too.
 He counts thy tears, and knows thy pain,
 Yea, every woe is weighed ;
 And not a cross He bids thee bear,
 But once on Him was laid.

Come, drink ye of the Loving Cup !
 Thou wouldst not pass it by ?
 'Tis kept for every chosen one
 Of God's dear family.
 Nor unbelieving, turn aside ;
 Thy Lord the Cup bestows :
 And O ! his face, above thee bent,
 With love and pity glows.

Those hands, once bleeding on the Cross,
 Are now outstretched to bless ;
 He draws thee closer to his heart
 For that cup's bitterness :
 He hears thy faintly-sobbing breath,
 He marks each quivering limb ;
 He drank it once for thee alone —
 Child ! drink it now with Him.

Let earth bring forth its bitter herbs,
 Soon all their power shall cease ;
 Come tribulation, if it will,
 With Christ's abiding Peace.
 I take the Cup — the Loving Cup,
 Thrice blessed shall it be ;
 I would not miss one gift, O Lord,
 Thy Blood hath bought for me.

III.

THREE DAYS IN THE LIFE
OF GELLERT.

THREE DAYS IN THE LIFE OF GELLERT.

THE poet Gellert, an incident in whose life is here related, was born in a village near Freiberg, in Saxony, July 4th, 1715. He was for many years professor of philosophy in the University of Leipsic, and had the charge of the education of some of the prominent men of his time. The poet Goethe was one of his pupils. He was the author of many hymns, songs, and fables. His poetry is more remarkable for its easy flow, and simple, unaffected piety, than for any great originality ; but he appeared at a time when poets, and especially religious poets, were rare in Germany, and this may account for the effect which the hymn translated below seemed to produce upon its readers. His influence was great in preparing the mind of the people to appreciate the truly good and noble in literature, and thus helping on the movement which produced Lessing, Goethe, Schiller, and the great German minds of the present time.

He died December 13th, 1769, after a life of almost constant suffering from ill-health, which prob-

ably prevented his leaving behind him any greater productions of his genius.

The translation of the hymn is very free, and aims only to give a slight idea of its character.

In a little room of the Schwartzes Brett in Leipzig, in the time of the Seven Years' War, sat one day a man at a writing-table, leaning his head upon his hand. His countenance was sickly and his figure infirm. A white cotton cap covered his head, and a calico dressing-gown enveloped his meagre form. It might easily be seen that the room was the abode of a scholar, for the walls were covered with shelves, upon which stood an army of books in rank and file, from the grenadier size in folio down to the light infantry in duodecimo. The table, too, was covered, and among these a well-worn Bible was conspicuous. It lay open at the second chapter of the Book of Job, and there was a mark at the tenth verse, that runs, "We have received good from the hand of the Lord, and shall we not receive evil also?" and the passage was underscored. The scholar's eyes were fixed upon a sheet of paper which lay before him. It was covered with verses that he was reading over; now and then he would take his pen, strike out a word and insert another, dot an i, or add a mark of punctuation, till it seemed to satisfy him.

The man was Christian Fürchtegott Gellert, and the verses were the beautiful hymn commencing, "I

have in hours of gladness," which he had just composed, inspired by the passage of Scripture he had fallen upon.

It happened to Gellert, as it often does to many worthy men, that just then there was an ebb in his receipts, which at the best were not so very large ; and I say nothing but the truth when I declare that he had not a single kreutzer in his pocket. Yesterday he had thirty dollars in good German money, which were designed for the purchase of wood, for the weather was fearfully cold, and his store could last but a very few days at the farthest. He knew of no source from which he might receive money, and the heart of the sickly man, who was easily chilled, was somewhat heavy.

Then he became conscious that it was getting rather cool in the room, and that the frost-flowers were beginning to open upon the window ; flowers that, besides the absence of color and perfume, have something else unpleasant for those near whom they grow.

But Gellert was accustomed, when the enemy armed with cares threatened his peace, to seize a weapon that always slew him, and everywhere slays, namely, the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. He had this morning seized this weapon, had opened straight to the Book of Job, and read with devout, prayerful heart. Deep was the impression of the holy word upon his pious soul, and wholly filled with the thought so strikingly appro-

priate to his case which it presented to him, he wrote down the hymn that was an echo of that holy word and of his state of mind.

At length he put up his pen, leaned again his head upon his hand, and said to himself, "No, it is certainly not regret at the spending of the thirty dollars that so disturbs me. Lord, thou who seest my heart, thou knowest that it was but a momentary weakness, a want of faith. Ah ! forgive, Lord. See, I believe, but help thou my unbelief."

At that moment there was a knock at the door, and without waiting Gellert's "Come in," a little stout man rushed in, and greeted Gellert warmly, who held out to him his thin hand languidly, with the words, "Good morning, dear doctor." The lively little man shook it heartily, repeating the greeting, laid down hat and cane, rubbed his hands, and cried, "Fuh ! how cold your room is ! That won't do ; you must keep warmer ! Put on more wood ? Would you perish with the cold ? "

Gellert smiled sadly, and said, "My wood is near the end ; I must be careful of it." — "But you are not a miser," cried the doctor ; "then you must buy some." Still more sadly, but a little confused, Gellert stammered, "Also my money is nearly at an end. But — never mind. I — will — take care" —

The doctor, whose mind never dwelt long on one thought, came to the table, and said, questioning, "Ah ! a new song ?" Gellert nodded ; but it could

be seen that he was embarrassed that the doctor had seen the verses. Without saying more, the doctor stepped to the window with the paper. Seeing the frosty windows, he exclaimed, "Frost! no, that must not be!"

Then he read the verses, while Gellert in his confusion did not raise his eyes from the floor. After a while the doctor cried out, "Excellent! how devout! how resigned! Truly Christlike and pious! Dear professor, I will take them home and copy them, and bring them back to you to-morrow. My dear wife, who honors you so deeply, must also read them. I know you have nothing against it."

Without waiting for Gellert's answer, he put the paper into his pocket, then approached the professor, who looked as if this summary proceeding of the doctor was, to say the least, rather cool, felt his pulse, and said, "No better? You have certainly cogitated too long yesterday! Against all rules! Must go out! Sitting is dreadful for you! You should have a little nag. Ride! That is the best thing for your health! Must buy one! Hear?" Gellert smiled again.

"Have you not a few more cheap recipes to give me, my friend? You have certainly come at a very convenient time!"

"And a fire in the stove you must have!" cried the doctor, unheeding.

"And when the last stick is put on?"

"Order some more down stairs. Now adieu, professor; God bless you."

With these words he seized hat and cane, made a short bow, and was off before Gellert had risen.

Gellert smiled again sorrowfully. "A true, good, brave man," said he to himself; "but if I should follow all his prescriptions, I should need a sum of money as big as old Neidhardt at the market-place."

The mention of this name gave another direction to his thoughts. The sorrowful expression vanished from his face, and gave way to one that showed that a pleasant idea filled his mind. He stepped to the window and yielded to this impression, which was still more increased by the noise in the stove of the wood which the doctor had ordered.

What had become of the money of Gellert, the thirty dollars which should have bought the winter store of wood, I will now relate. Yesterday it was turned to a purpose which shows the noble heart of the professor in a clear light; but the continuation of a warm room is the question just now with him.

FIRST DAY.

In one of the most retired and oldest of the streets of Leipsic, that had remained almost unchanged through all the catastrophes of the city, stood a little old ruined house. It belonged to a certain Neidhardt, one of the richest men of the city, but also one of the most covetous money makers. It had been his father's house. He would

have sold it years ago if he had not reckoned that it would bring him more money to let it than to put the money obtained by its sale at interest. He had not lived there himself since his youth. O, no ! he inhabited a stately mansion in the market-place. Upon the preservation and repairing of the ruined house he expended nothing ; hence it had fallen into a sad condition. The floors were rotten and broken, the walls damp, and the sashes of the windows hardly held together. For a year it had been let to a poor shoemaker, who, richer in children than in customers, ate the bread of affliction and of care, and was hardly in a condition to pay the rent, so much had the war raised the price of the means of living. The family was good and honorable, and truly fearing God. So long as the father could work, they got along passably well ; but the summer before he had been very ill, and with the poor food they were obliged to eat, he had not been able to recover his usual strength, and could earn very little.. It was only when Want had seized upon them with her iron hand that the children had resolved for the first time to beg. The rent had amounted to thirty dollars, and the poor creatures thought with agony that the hard-hearted Neidhardt might seize their few possessions, the want of which would still increase their misery. The poor wife had begged for delay and compassion, but had been driven away with hard words and sharp threatenings. At the close of the last quarter, the cruel

man had declared that if the money should not be ready in four weeks, he would drive them out of the dwelling.

The poor woman went back to her home in a state of despair, and the relation of the decision of the landlord had such an effect upon her husband that he became again severely ill, and since that time apparently near death. Who can describe the sighs and tears of mother and children? Ever nearer drew the dreaded day. It had become winter. Icy cold pierced the wind through the loose windows into the dark, damp room which was the abode of the deepest distress. There in a miserable bed lay the sick father, upon whose wasted features death seemed to have set his seal, and six young children cowered around the hardly warmed stove, freezing, hungry, crying. Mother-heart, can you bear this? Wringing her hands, there she stood. She had no more tears. The sick man turned himself in his bed, and said to her feebly, —

“When there is no more pity on earth, there is yet some above, with the Lord, who hath said, ‘Call upon me in trouble and I will deliver thee, and thou shalt praise me.’ Come, dear wife and children, we will pray to the Lord, and He will not leave us.”

Deeply moved by the trusting words of the sick man, the wife sank upon her knees by the bedside, and the children knelt around. The father raised himself in bed, looked up full of faith, and prayed loud, fervently, and with joyful confidence. And as

he said amen, it seemed to them that He who has spoken those words of warning, promise, and encouragement, said yea and amen to their prayer, and a trust filled their hearts that opened the door to new hope. The mother and two eldest children took baskets to go out beyond the gate, where workmen were employed upon the balcony of a new house, and were accustomed to allow the poor to gather the chips and bits of wood that fell. The three others went to ask bread at the houses of the charitable, while the youngest stayed with its father, to hand him anything he might need.

It was the morning of the day upon which Neidhardt was to fulfill his threat. The sky was cloudless ; out of the deep blue shone the morning sun clear and bright upon the hard frozen earth ; and the east wind blew with cutting sharpness through the streets and the thin, poor clothing of the three who went to gather the chips which the work-people would not stoop to pick up. They trembled with cold, for no food had to-day revived them.

It was upon this very morning that something seemed to draw Gellert abroad. The weather was cold, and the warmth of his room very comfortable, and yet he could not withstand the impulse to go out. He put on a warm coat, took his hat, and directed his steps to the gate toward which the poor woman and her children were going.

The children complained of the sharp cutting wind to their mother. "Run ahead," said she ;

"you know the place, and that will keep you warm." Then the children's nimble feet bore them along too quickly for their mother to keep up with them, for sorrow and heaviness of heart move slowly. As she went out of the gate and the children were out of her sight, then fell the whole burden of her grief upon her poor heart, and the tears which had not come at home streamed down from her eyes, and she was obliged to sit down upon a chance stone by the way-side, for her limbs would not carry her further ; and as she sat there Gellert came along, and saw her quietly weeping, her face hidden in her apron, and quite regardless of all that passed. Her appearance arrested his steps. Gellert knew suffering and want. In Hainichen, in his father's house, where, with a scanty income, thirteen children sat at table with father and mother, they were no uncommon guests, and his own life could have told the trials of poverty. But it is an old truth, that the heart of a poor man has much more pity and greater benevolence than that of the rich ; for we know the hardening power of riches, and that here is the explanation of the passage of holy Scripture, that it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Gellert stood there looking at the weeping woman, and a crowd of recollections thronged his soul, as a light breath of wind awakes in the Æolian harp such moving tones. The streets were almost empty on

this cold morning, but there was a great stir in the heart of the noble man, and it rang out clear in his soul that here was good for him to do, here must he help if he only can. He stepped lightly to the woman's side, laid his hand upon her shoulder, and said, as once the Lord at the gate of Nain to another deeply afflicted mother, "Woman, weep not." The woman, who in her trouble had forgotten everything around her, looked up, frightened at this salutation, with streaming eyes, into the face of the man who stood before her; but the alarm vanished, his countenance was so mild, so sympathizing, so trust-inviting. Yet the misery which is indeed deep shuts with brazen gates the heart and mouth; it draws back within itself, for the experience that a full warm sympathy is seldom to be found forms a coating of ice about the heart that melts with great difficulty. And this poor woman had learned too well the hardness of mankind. As she was silent, he begged her with such assuring words to put confidence in him, that unwillingly the woman looked at him again. And now the brazen gates began to open, and the ice to melt. She felt impelled to tell this man, whom she had never seen before, all. The seal fell from her lips, and she related to him the whole history of her trouble up to that time, and how here the whole burden seemed to have fallen upon her soul, and she could once again weep; and that now her heart was lighter, now she could breathe; but what pressed upon her, that was the

hardest. And she told him what Neidhardt had threatened to do, and that she had not a penny for bread, none for medicine for her sick husband, to say nothing of the debt of the thirty dollars. "O!" cried she, her misery loosening her tongue, "my husband will die of his sickness, and my children and I of hunger. O! if it were only over; for us there is only deliverance in the grave."

"The Lord lives still, who turns the hearts of the children of men as streams of water;" and that word seized powerfully upon the woman's soul. She sprang up, grasped his hand convulsively, and cried,—

"Do you believe that He will help us?"

"I believe it," returned Gellert, yet more strongly: for in his heart was the power of the Lord manifest; he had already determined upon the help. It would cost him his whole living; but he thought not of that, and thought not of what might happen to him, only to help, to save the doubting.

"Come with me to my dwelling," said he, "and you shall see that the Lord still lives who delivers from death and destruction;" and he turned toward home.

"O sir!" cried the poor woman, wonderfully comforted, "only let me speak to my children;" and she hastened on to where the little ones had already filled their baskets with chips, then turned back again, and followed Gellert in silent prayer and hope.

He entered his room with joyful heart, opened

his purse and took some money, saying, as he laid it in the woman's hand, "There are thirty dollars, and there rests no curse upon it." As the woman in the exuberance of her joy and gratitude fell down and would embrace his knees, he raised her up, and said, —

"Thank the Lord, who has heard your prayer, and has sent me ; Him should you praise. But," continued he, "do not go to old Neidhardt till it has struck eleven ; then come and bring the money. Remember !" At length the woman, who could scarcely leave off thanking him, took her leave.

But Gellert folded his hands, and prayed, and thanked the Lord, who had thought him worthy to fulfill his holy designs. He implored that He would give his blessing to him to complete the work which he had in view. And when he had prayed, he hastened to old Neidhardt, for it was now near eleven o'clock. Never happier or more full of hope had Gellert passed through the streets of Leipsic than on this morning. He found the full truth of the holy word, "It is more blessed to give than to receive," and his soul was filled with a holy peace and joy. Knocking at Neidhardt's door, on a sullen "Come in" he entered the room. The old man was standing by a table, counting piles of gold. It was very plain from his looks that the visitor was unwelcome. He opened the drawer of the table, shoved the money in, shut and locked the drawer, and was about to ask peevishly the cause of the visit, when

Gellert pleasantly greeted him, and looked at him with eyes so beaming with love and inward peace that he was ashamed to show ill-humor before him. The old man felt that he could not treat unhandsomely a man so universally esteemed and respected. So he begged him to be seated, and courteously asked to what he was indebted for the honor of so early a visit. Gellert, pleased that the frowns of ill-humor had so soon smoothed themselves out, seated himself, and, without replying directly to his question, began,—

“From you, worthy Mr. Neidhardt, can I certainly learn much, for a man whom the Lord has so richly blessed as yourself will not fail to make a good use of his riches. You know, probably, the great art of doing real good to others?”

Old Neidhardt, whose thoughts were more than half occupied with his money drawer, felt nevertheless the pricking of this home question of Gellert’s, and a voice from the interior of his heart, that spoke good German, might have said to him, “Is that true, old sinner? What will you answer now?”

He colored a little, the answer stuck upon his tongue because it would have been a lie, and he could not find another, therefore he mumbled in his embarrassment something that sounded like—

“Hem — ah! yes — certainly — hem.”

Whether Gellert did not hear correctly or did not wish to hear, I cannot say, but he began to speak

out of the fullness of his heart of the joy and exceeding blessedness of benevolence. He had just experienced this joy and blessing in the richest measure, therefore the words sprang forth with eloquent enthusiasm from his soul, and worked with so great and persuasive a power that the old man at first trembled inwardly, and then became more and more moved and excited, and an inward conviction of their truth took possession of him. This reacted upon the speaker, and still more ardent and convincing became his words, and still more powerfully did they move the miser's heart. It struck eleven, and with the stroke of the clock there was a knock upon the door, and the poor shoemaker's wife came into the room with joyful countenance, and laid Gellert's roll of money upon the table, saying,—

“Here, I bring you the money ; but now give me back the letter that my poor sick husband has written you upon his death-bed, entreating you not to turn us out of the house.”

The old man changed color, and his hand that he instinctively reached out after the money trembled. Gellert opposite, whose convincing words had made so deep an impression upon him, the language of the woman was a deep mortification to him, and a judgment whose weight in that frame of mind he felt deeply. Shame, confusion, repentance moved him with power never known before. At length he recollect ed himself sufficiently to gasp out,—

"There was not really such a hurry. How can you speak so? Don't you see that I have a visitor? It was not meant so badly; only a threat, that was all. Now go."

But during this unconnected speech his busy fingers had unfolded the parcel and put it in the pocket of his dressing-gown. Gellert had observed him and read every emotion upon his countenance. Almost unconsciously he said, half aloud, "There are thirty dollars, and there rests no curse upon it."

"Yes, yes," said the woman, "and you say there is time enough because you are ashamed of your hard-heartedness before this good, pious man. Do you not remember how yesterday, when I begged for indulgence, without listening to me, you chased me forth, crying, 'Money, money must I have, or I will put you and all your things into the street'? Do you not know? I have not cursed you, Mr. Neidhardt, but the Lord, who has said, 'Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy,' has heard my distress. We had not eaten for twenty-four hours, and to be thrown into the street with my poor, sick one, O, that would be too, too much. 'The measure that you mete to others shall be measured to you again,' hath the Lord said. You cared not what might become of me and mine. And when I came home, my pious husband prayed with us, and also for you, Mr. Neidhardt, that God would turn your heart; take the stony heart out of your breast, and give you a heart of flesh. Then I

went out with my children to gather chips, for we had no wood this cold weather, and then all the trouble came over me, and I sat down to weep. Then this good man found me and gave me the thirty dollars."

Gellert had motioned to her in vain to be silent about that.

"Yes," continued she, "don't tell me to be silent. I must tell it, else my heart would burst."

Neidhardt turned round and looked inquiringly at Gellert, who sat confounded there, looking upon the floor.

"You have done that?" said the old man with astonishment.

The hand of the Lord had seized him, the blessing of the woman upon Gellert had moved him greatly. His hard heart was softened. He stepped to his desk, took a little piece of paper, and gave it to the woman.

"There is the letter of your husband, and here also the thirty dollars. Take care of your sick husband with it, and buy bread for your children; your debt is paid."

He turned to his book, opened to the page where the debt was recorded, and with a quick, fiery dash of his pen blotted it out. Then he came up to Gellert, seized his hand with emotion,—

"Excellent man! You cannot only talk beautifully and movingly, but act more beautifully. God reward you! To atone in some measure for my un-

kindness to this poor family, will you allow me to request you to go with me to their house? You must learn to know me from another side."

The woman stood there like a statue. At length she recovered herself; with tears streaming from her eyes, she said, —

"O, now I see that the prayer of the righteous can do much if it be earnest. Ah, Mr. Neidhardt, forgive me if I have thought evil of you. God bless you! You are our good angel whom the Lord has sent for our deliverance. How can we thank you for all?"

They were soon in the room, where a moving picture of human misery met their eyes. But as a gleam of sunshine after a stormy day, so did the story of the wife and mother work upon the sick father and the children. All stretched forth their hands towards their benefactors, and the thanks were without end.

"Dost thou see, dear wife, the Lord has heard us? Praised be his name!" cried the sick man.

Tears ran from the eyes of old Neidhardt, so was he moved by the thanks of the poor creatures. Gellert spoke words of comfort to the shoemaker that revived him and filled him with new hope. He promised to send him a friendly physician, and Neidhardt confirmed that. Neidhardt did not stop with this first act of kindness. He apprenticed the son of the shoemaker to a merchant, clothed and sent the other children to school, and allowed them

the use of the house free of rent. The shoemaker recovered, and Neidhardt helped him to a flourishing business. The old man from that time seemed entirely changed, and remained Gellert's warmest friend and admirer through life.

This is what happened on the day before the opening of our story ; and this is what had become of the thirty dollars. Gellert was poorer in money, but richer in his heart ; and in the stillness of his room he thanked the Lord, who had so blessed his word and work.

SECOND DAY.

As the little fat doctor went out of Gellert's room, he met the housemaid. "Show me the professor's wood-bin," said he. The maid led him to it and said, —

"It will soon be empty."

"That will not do," said he, shaking his head ; "he must have a warm room. Take good care of that."

Then he hastened home to prepare his good wife for the pleasure of reading Gellert's hymn ; but such was not to be to-day.

Hardly had he turned into the street where he lived, when a poor woman came up to him.

"Ah, doctor, come with me to see my sick husband. Professor Gellert has said so, and old Mr. Neidhardt will have me call you. Indeed, it is necessary."

“Again so soon the good Gellert!” said the doctor to himself. “How did you happen to know him?” he asked the woman. Then the thankful heart opened, and she began to tell. “Come along! you can tell me as we go,” said the hurried doctor; but more than once he stopped right in the middle of the street, so was he interested in the woman’s story.

“Now I know where his money is gone, and why he is as poor as a church mouse. Now it is clear why he sits in a cold room and can buy no wood?”

With bitter pain did the poor woman hear these words, learning from them how great had been the offering which Gellert had made her. As she uttered this feeling, the doctor cried, —

“No matter; he will soon have both money and wood. Such as he the Lord leaves not. Believe me.”

They entered the little house, and the doctor ordered what was necessary, and then hastened out, his head and heart full of the generous conduct of the poet.

When he came to his door there stood a lad holding a stately saddle-horse.

“What is your business?” asked he of the boy.

“The magistrate of ——,” naming one of the towns near Leipsic, “begs you will come directly to his house. The mistress is ill. Ah, doctor, they are such good people! and master doubts how it will end if you come not soon.”

The doctor was not only an excellent, assiduous physician, but also a man of the softest and best heart. No choice remained ; his wife must wait for the poem till he came back. He hurried into the house, spoke a few loving words to his wife, rushed down-stairs, threw himself upon the horse, and trotted off.

He thought it would be difficult to go by the highway, for the Prussian soldiers and artillery had almost entire possession of it ; but he was able to do so.

He stopped before the door of a fine mansion, which the boy had designated as the residence of his master, the magistrate. A gentleman came out, anxiety and care written upon his face. After a few half-loud words with him, the doctor followed him into the upper part of the house. After about an hour, the two came down together. The magistrate's countenance was much more cheerful, and the doctor looked much relieved. Both went into a room where a large number of Prussian officers were sitting down to dinner, whom they joined. Who the officers were they did not know, but they noticed that one among them was treated by the rest with the greatest deference, and that he, from his dress, appeared to be of superior rank, while his face bore the impress of affability and mildness. The doctor had a gigantic appetite, and labored with all his might to subdue it, without giving much attention to the conversation of the officers ; and the magistrate,

who saw with pleasure that he seemed to enjoy his dinner, constantly offered him new morsels.

" You are from Leipsic ? " said the gentleman who had heard the magistrate call him ' doctor.' "

" At your service, sir," answered the doctor, without allowing himself to be disturbed in the business in which he was engaged with such diligence and apparent success.

" Then perhaps you are acquainted with Professor Gellert ? " asked the gentleman further.

Now the doctor laid down his fork, looked at the inquirer, and, as he made a good impression upon him, he answered, —

" I am his physician ; and can add with pride, his friend."

" Ah ! " was the gentleman's reply ; " I have been told that his health is very poor."

" That it is, unfortunately. He wants, like many other literary men, a good vigorous circulation. It would be especially good for him if he could ride. I have often told him he ought to buy a horse."

" And will he do so ? " asked the other.

" He has the will, but the means of accomplishing it seem to fail ; " and he rubbed significantly his thumb and forefinger.

" Then he is poor ? " asked the gentleman with great interest.

" As a church mouse," vociferated the doctor. " If you will permit me, I will tell how I found him this morning."

The gentleman urged him to do so, and the lively doctor related everything to the minutest particular that I have told in the foregoing pages.

When he had finished, the gentleman clasped his hands, and said, much moved,—

“And such a noble man to freeze and starve ! That is too bad ! and he can buy no wood and no horse because he gives his last farthing to the suffering !”

The doctor was ready. “If you take so much interest in the noble poet,” he said, putting his hand into his pocket, “perhaps it will not be unwelcome to you to read a poem which he has composed this morning upon the passage in Job ii. 10, which is written above it.”

He reached the paper to the gentleman, without waiting for his answer, and continued,—

“It is his original handwriting that I have taken in order to make a copy of it, though as yet I have not had time.”

The gentleman reached his hand out hastily to grasp the paper. “The last song of our poet Gellert whom we all honor must not be a private enjoyment ; I will read it aloud ;” and he read with deep feeling and expression.

“I have in hours of gladness
Found life all free from sadness,
And full of richest joy ;
Let me not now in sorrow,
In trouble for the morrow,
With foolish thoughts my soul annoy.

“ My soul, though wrath deserving,
 O Lord, thou art preserving,
 And softly chidest me ;
 Shall I, for comfort sighing,
 Be cowardly still trying
 Thy gentle punishment to flee ? ”

“ To thee, thy Spirit moving,
 I give my powers of loving,
 To thee, my Lord and King.
 God can deceive me never,
 His word stands sure forever,
 My trusting heart to Him I bring. ”

“ I will, when doubt comes o'er me,
 And clouds are thick before thee,
 Keep closer to thy side ;
 And though thy face be hidden,
 I shall not be forbidden
 Within my Father's arms to hide. ”

“ When I this earth am leaving,
 To Christ, my soul receiving,
 I'll yield my latest breath ;
 I am an heir of heaven,
 My sins are all forgiven,
 Why fear I either grave or death ? ”

All the company present listened attentively, and all remained silent for a long time when he had finished reading. The impression was powerful. The magistrate stood with folded hands, and one tear chased another down his cheeks, for it worked the deepest upon him who had just experienced such deliverance from grief and anxiety.

“ Doctor,” at length the gentleman said, “ would it be too much to ask to be allowed to take a copy of this poem, if you intend to remain here for a little while ? ”

“ I do not think,” said the doctor, “ that I can do wrong to allow you to do so.”

“ Dear Nostiz, pray will you be good enough to make immediately a fair copy of this poem ? ”

He reached him the paper over the table, and the officer retired instantly.

“ And the man who has made this trustful song, and many other beautiful songs and fables, has no wood, that he can have a warm room for his weak body ? ” asked the magistrate passionately.

“ It is as I have told you,” answered the doctor. “ I found him to-day in a cold room.”

“ I would rather freeze myself, like a dog ! ” cried he so earnestly that all at the table broke into loud laughter.

The worthy man thought that the company did not believe that he meant what he said, unless he spoke it out. He struck against his breast, saying with emotion, “ Yes, so truly as the Lord has this day delivered me from great trouble, I will send him to-day such a load of wood as has never rolled over the streets of Leipsic.” He sprang to the window, and called, “ Peter ! ”

In a moment the boy who had brought the horse to the doctor entered the room.

“ Go to the shed,” said his master, “ and load the

great wagon that we use to carry goods to the Leipsic fair, with beech wood, — the only kind there is now: harness four horses, and go to Leipsic. There ask where Professor Gellert lives, and unload the wood before his door. Then greet him kindly from me, and say that I hope he will with that keep a right warm room ; and that it is a present for the beautiful hymn, ‘I have in hours of gladness.’ But do you hear ? you must hurry ; it must be there to-day.”

“ It shall be; sir,” answered the boy, and went.

“ Bravo ! ” cried the gentleman and all the officers as with one voice. “ Bravo, sir ! you are a noble man,” said the gentleman, “ and have set an example which is truly worthy of imitation.”

Gellert was now again the subject of conversation, and the doctor must relate much about him, and of his life and doings, which he willingly did, as he loved Gellert warmly and truly. At length came the ordnance officer bringing the copy, and the gentleman returned the original to the doctor with many thanks. The magistrate took it out of his hand.

“ What is right for one is right for another. You must allow me to take a copy also.”

“ With pleasure,” answered the doctor, “ but I must have the sheet before I go home.”

“ Certainly, certainly. As I have no time to copy it, I will send it to Mr. Cautor, who is a fine writer, and nimble with his pen.”

That done, the doctor took leave of the officers and the gentleman, and went to his patient.

As he passed out, he asked a boy who the gentleman was whom all seemed to honor so much.

"Prince Henry of Prussia, honored sir."

The doctor rubbed his forehead and hastened up the stairs. A short time after, the tramping of horses was heard, and the prince and his escort moved off in the direction of Leipsic. Then there was a great noise of the cracking of whips. The magistrate drew the doctor to the window overlooking the court-yard. Four strong draft-horses were trying to start an enormous cart full of beech wood.

"Have I not kept my word?" asked the magistrate.

"Nobly," cried the doctor. "But how I wish I could be there when it arrives! God reward you, dear sir."

To the doctor's delight, the patient seemed to be doing well, so that he would be able to reach Leipsic in good time, which he was anxious to do, as he expected to be called upon to lodge some of the military at his house. When he at length was again in possession of the precious manuscript, he left the town and rode back through crowds of soldiers and artillery to Leipsic, where he then, after he had related the occurrences of the day to his wife, read the poem aloud to her without anything new occurring to disturb him.

About the time that the doctor was dining unawares with Prince Henry, Gellert went out of the city gate, where he the day before had found the weeping woman, to take some exercise according to the doctor's prescription.

Pictures of that which he had lived through the preceding day crowded through his soul, but he had not a sigh for the thirty dollars, although he had not even a penny to bestow upon a beggar who asked alms of him. He extended his walk much farther than usual, so that it was almost dark when he reached home. What was his astonishment at seeing an enormous pile of the best wood before the door, upon which three wood-cutters were hard at work, though the pile was much too large to be finished that night.

With a light sigh, the wish just crossed his mind that he were so fortunate as to call such a pile of wood his own, as he saw no prospect of being able to buy more.

As he came up to the workmen, they greeted him respectfully, so was he honored by even the lowest classes ; and one of them said, "Sir, your wagon-load of wood is more than twice as large as common. We shall hardly be able to finish cutting it to-morrow ; and the wood is as solid as steel and iron."

"I? my wood?" said Gellert ; and thought with sorrow how nearly empty his wood-box was. "I know nothing about it. You must be mistaken, good people."

He hurried into the house, and the wood-cutters looked after him and laughed.

"There goes one of your learned ones that would forget and lose his own head if it wasn't fastened on," said one.

"Pshaw!" cried another, "let the man alone. He makes those beautiful pious hymns and songs; and Leipsic ought to be proud of him."

During this short conversation, Gellert had gone into the house. The landlady came up to him with a beaming countenance.

"I congratulate you, sir," said she.

"For what?" asked Gellert, astonished.

The woman answered, "You had only just gone out, when a cart with four horses and an enormous load of wood stopped before the door. 'To whom does the cart belong?' I asked. The driver answered: 'I am the servant of the magistrate Von — of —, and bring the wood to Professor Gellert. He lives here, does he not?' — 'Yes,' said I, 'but he is not at home.' — 'No matter,' said the man, 'I will unload here and leave my message with you, and you can give it to the professor.' They unloaded and unloaded, and it seemed as if there was no end to it. It was a mountain of wood, and I got a policeman to send some wood-sawyers. They have worked all the afternoon, and you would hardly know it; the pile seems just as large. They must move it into the court, for it will not do to leave it in the street all night, as I know by experience; for I could tell you a story"—

"Pray, never mind now," interrupted Gellert, who well knew that when the fluent tongue of the good woman began upon one of the stories of her own experience, of which she had one for every conceivable case, he should have to stay long in the cold, "tell me, rather, how much it costs."

"Costs! honored professor! it costs just nothing at all; it is a present."

"What do you say?" cried Gellert, full of astonishment.

"Truly," continued she; "for the message of the boy was just that;" and she repeated, word for word, the message which the magistrate had charged his servant to deliver.

Gellert was completely dumbfounded. "For the hymn, 'I have in hours of gladness,' did he say?"

"Exactly so, sir. It must be a new hymn, for I have never seen it."

Gellert shook his head incredulously, for how it could be explained he could not imagine. But the facts were patent. There was the wood; was excellent; cost him nothing, and would last the whole winter. When nothing else remained to be told about it, it was still a wonder. Many times more did the landlady relate the whole occurrence, with the message of the boy, till he felt there could be no doubt.

Gellert went up to his room, which he found delightfully warm, put on his dressing-gown, and seated himself in the arm-chair in which his father in Hai-

nichen had passed many an anxious hour. But Gellert sat there more comfortably than in the morning. God had given his blessing to him, which was what he needed most ; for that he thanked him heartily, ate his frugal supper that was brought to him, studied a while, and went to bed with the determination to go himself to the magistrate so soon as the passage of troops was over, and find the necessary explanation. To the doctor he gave not a thought, for how should he get to the town of —— when the army filled up all the road between Leipsic and that place ? And before he went to sleep he shook his head to signify that he could not explain the mystery at all.

THIRD DAY.

On the following morning the doctor intended to go to see Professor Gellert, to give him a solution of the mystery of the wood ; but such good fortune was not destined for him.

Early in the day a large number of soldiers were quartered upon him, and he had hardly time to visit the patients who needed his attentions the most. As he was rushing through the streets in the greatest haste, a voice called to him from a window. He looked up, and saw old Neidhardt beckoning to him earnestly to come to him.

“ How does the poor shoemaker get along ? ” asked he, after a hasty greeting.

“ For whom you have given a better prescription than I ? ” asked the doctor.

"Ah, doctor," replied the old man, pleasantly moved, "that is the work of your worthy friend, Professor Gellert. Without him I should have acted according to my old fashion, which I now condemn."

"Yes, yes," replied the doctor; "but continue with your prescriptions, and in eight days is the man as strong as an oak. Apropos, Mr. Neidhardt, do you know the whole history of that? Do you know what it cost Professor Gellert to give that thirty dollars?"

"How so?"

"Well, remember Gellert is very poor. That thirty dollars was all the money that he had in the world, and since day before yesterday he has not had a single penny, and knows not how to get one; and yet he never thought of the consequences to himself, only upon the want of the poor creatures."

The completely changed old man clasped his hands, and cried, "Is that so?"

"As true as the sun shines. Listen, and I will read you the hymn that he has composed in this distress."

He read to the astonished Neidhardt the hymn that he had put in his pocket to return to Gellert.

The old man listened to it with deep attention.

"That is excellent. Gellert is a noble man. Let me copy the hymn, doctor."

"I would be glad to do so if I were not obliged to give it back to him."

"Well, you are going to the shoemaker's, then come back and get it from me."

"Very well," said the doctor, and hastened away.

Neidhardt wrote quickly, and then read and re-read it, and said to himself, "And such a man to freeze and starve, and I to have an abundance! He has led me for the first time in my life to do a good action, and I feel the blessing it brings to the soul. I will send him immediately thirty dollars. He must have it back again before he knows whom it comes from."

He hastened to his desk, took out a roll of thirty dollars, sealed it, wrote upon the cover, "For the beautiful hymn, 'I have in hours of gladness,'" and gave it to a servant, with the direction to give it into Gellert's hand, but to hasten away directly, and on no account to tell from whom it came.

Gellert sat in his warm room writing diligently at his table, when there was a knock upon the door, and a servant-maid entered, laid the roll upon the table, and vanished. Gellert took it up, read the direction, opened it and found the money, laid it down, took the cover up again, and read it over and over.

"That is past my comprehension indeed," said he aloud. "Is then the hymn printed, and in every one's hand? That is impossible. Can it be the doctor? I cannot think so; for he doesn't yet know anything about the shoemaker's family, and I have not been able to send him there, because I have not

seen him since, much less spoken to him. God only knows how it has all come about."

During his meditations came another knock upon his door. This time it was a Prussian staff-officer, whom the professor greeted, who began, —

"Have I the honor of addressing Professor Gellert?"

"The same, at your service."

"His Royal Highness the Prince Henry of Prussia, who has been here since yesterday evening, sends his compliments to Professor Gellert, and asks if he may be permitted to visit him, since he heard that Professor Gellert is ill."

"Wait upon me! a king, a royal prince, — me! That must either be a mistake, or it is a very unusual choice of expression. Pray give my most obedient service to his royal highness, and say that I shall consider it the greatest honor to wait upon him at any hour which he shall name, since I am by no means sick abed, as you see."

The adjutant was not a little amused at the astonishment of the professor, whom the condescension of the prince seemed almost to deprive of his senses.

"Do not mind, sir; his royal highness is accustomed to use these condescending expressions, and he testifies by them the high opinion he has of your worthy self. But if you prefer to rejoice him by a visit, I should consider it an honor to accompany you at once to his royal highness, if it is agreeable to you."

"Then I must beg that you will permit me to change my dress."

The adjutant bowed, and Gellert went into his bed-room and came out in a short time arrayed in his best clothes, ready to follow the adjutant.

As they entered the presence of the prince, he came forward to meet Gellert, gave him his hand, and overwhelmed him with friendly words, saying he was especially delighted to see the author of the beautiful hymn; "I have in hours of gladness."

Gellert could hardly believe his ears as the prince also spoke of the hymn. He thought now that in some unaccountable way it must have got into print, but how he could not imagine. He was quite confounded, and would gladly have asked the prince how he could have become acquainted with that hymn, but that he did not consider it polite to question a prince.

"I have been told that your health is poor, but I am very glad to find you better than I had feared. But your countenance is pale, and looks as if you needed to take more exercise."

"My profession compels me to lead a somewhat sedentary life," said Gellert, bowing.

"True," continued the prince; "but you must be more careful of him whom the German folk regard as their favorite poet, and take more exercise."

"I take all that is in my power; all that I have strength for, your highness."

"Well, honored professor; but yet I am sure not

enough. How often must the dirty streets prevent you, to say nothing of other hindrances ! You should have a horse, and ride daily. No other form of exercise is to be compared with that in value for one who is obliged to lead a sedentary life."

"Very true, your highness ; my physician has also recommended it to me, but it is rather a costly prescription."

"Very true," said the prince, imitating his words ; "when the heart is so good and merciful as to spend the last thirty dollars on the suffering."

Gellert almost sank to the floor with confusion. "Does all the world know?" It became blue and green before his eyes.

The prince saw his embarrassment and seized his hand.

"Noble man," said he, "I know how you have acted, and far be it from me to reproach you with what God's rich grace has enabled you to do. Yes, God bless you for it. But allow me the honor to present you with a horse from my stable,— a suitable saddle-horse for a man of peace."

"Your royal highness"— stammered the astonished poet, but his voice refused to utter another word.

The prince pressed his hand, much moved himself; then he said, to cut short his thanks, "My engagements call me away. Adieu, honored professor. God preserve your precious life long to us. May the pony aid in that." He bowed and went into the next room.

A moment Gellert stood there without being able to collect himself. Then the adjutant came to him,—

“ You see, honored sir, a crown prince does not mean to be surpassed by a magistrate.”

“ How does your prince know all that?” stammered he.

The adjutant laughed.

“ Princes indeed do not know everything, but often more than other people. Don’t distress yourself about that, but use the prince’s present right diligently for your health.”

Gellert understood the hint that it was time for him to take his leave.

He accordingly did so, accompanied to the door by the adjutant, whom he begged to present his warmest thanks to the prince. Riddle upon riddle,— it seemed as if some strange magic had been working in the events of the last few days. It was all like a dream: but as he came to his dwelling, there were the wood-cutters hard at work upon the wood, and the prince’s servant held a beautiful horse, saddled and bridled, before the door.

“ Signs and wonders are happening, professor,” cried the landlady. “ Yesterday the splendid wood, that seems to grow more and more, and to-day this royal horse! What is coming next?”

“ No, no,” laughed Gellert; “ be quiet.”

Gellert sat in his room toward evening; he had paid the wood-cutters and had much money left.

He had the horse which he had needed so much, and his soul was filled with thankfulness to God. He seized a pen and wrote another hymn, even more full of pious confidence than the first ; and as he had thus given expression to his feelings, the doctor came in.

“ Again a hymn so soon ! ” cried he, coming up to the table and throwing down the copy of the hymn. “ Pretty.”

“ Well,” said Gellert, laughing and taking out his pocket-book to put the paper into it, “ you sha’n’t have it again, doctor, for God knows what a stir you have all made with it.”

The doctor was convulsed with laughter as Gellert related to him what had happened.

“ Now explain to me how that all hangs together.”

The doctor looked long at him, and a holy joy played upon his features.

“ What I have done is nothing,” said he. “ God has put his blessing upon your song, that has proved itself powerful. That is all, dear friend. I can write expensive prescriptions, but I cannot dispense them nor the apothecary. This time He above has dispensed them without my anticipating it. To him be the honor.”

And with these words he hastened out.



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